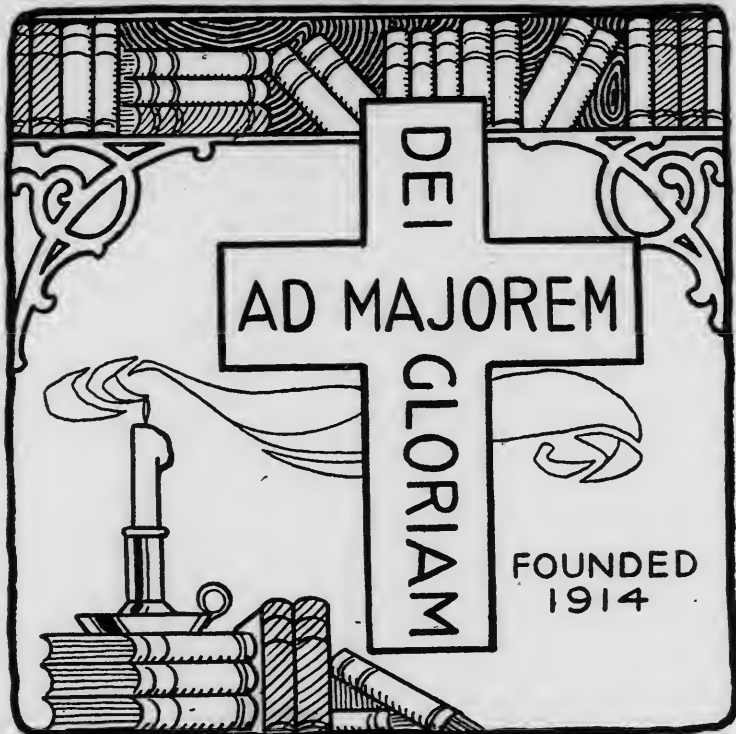


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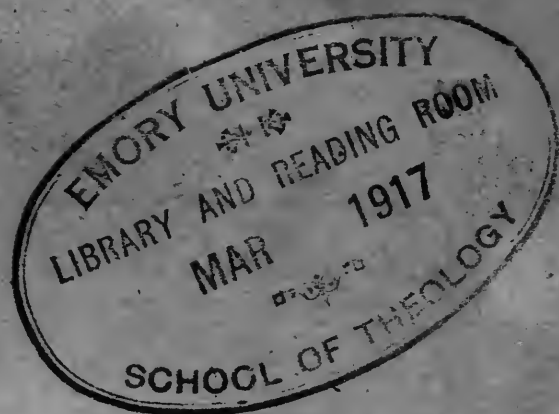
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THE
ILLUMINATOR,

FOR THE YEAR 1835;

DESIGNED

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES

OF

THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION,

TO

VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES,

TO

GUARD THE MEMBERS

AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY,

AND TO

EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS

OF THE SO CALLED

“GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.”

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1st Ed. *Rev. John Brown*
Examiner

THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

No. 1. LIVERPOOL, JAN. 7, 1835. **Price 1½d.**

INTRODUCTION.

THERE having of late appeared in our horizon, a meteoric phenomenon—an *ignis fatuus*, or JACK O' LANTERN, which has been the means of decoying many an unwary traveller from his right path, and which may perhaps delude many more, we deem it expedient to counteract its direful influence, by exposing the *nature* and *origin* of this false delusive light.

This meteor, vulgarly known by the above-mentioned name, "Jack o' Lantern," is usually seen hovering over *bogs*, *marshes*, *low places*, and sometimes *dunghills*, and is nothing more than inflammable vapour produced from the *putrefaction* and *decomposition* of those substances with which swamps and bogs abound; and being very easily *ignited*, causes that *murky*, *flickering*, and *uncertain* light, which never fails to lead those who are simple enough to follow it, into the same quagmires from which itself emanated, and into which it must soon sink again:

— A wandering fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night
Condenses, and the cold environs round,
Kindled through agitation to a flame
(Which oft they say some evil spirit attends)
Hovering and blazing with delusive light
Misleads th' amazed night-wanderer from his way,
Through bogs and mire."

To provide for the safety of travellers, and prevent for the future such disastrous consequences, we have projected an *Illuminator*,

which shall not only serve as a beacon to enable such as have deviated, and, wearied with their fruitless wanderings, to find their way back ; but, by its broad and steady light, keep those who are right, from swerving from their legitimate path.

In addition to this, a trusty *Watchman* is appointed "to cry aloud and spare not," to point out the imminent peril to which those will be exposed who may be tempted to pursue so devious and ruinous a course ; and especially to warn the young and inexperienced against being so captivated by specious appearances as to be induced to err to their ultimate destruction, by plunging headlong into a slough from which they may never be able to extricate themselves.

But to be more serious. It must be obvious to the most superficial observer of passing events in this town and neighbourhood, that the objects proposed by the supporters of the Association calling itself the *Grand Central Association*, involve religious and constitutional questions, not merely of high moment as concerns the practical operation of the Methodist economy, but also the very existence of the connexion. The causes leading to this state of things, will be judged of differently by different persons. It will answer the designs of the reformers, no doubt, to fix the odium of *tyranny, jesuitism, priestcraft, and mal-practices* of every description, on the Conference and the preachers, as forming the ground of their proceedings. We have no doubt, however, but other and perfectly different influences are in operation to stimulate the assailants to their fierce and somewhat militant attack on the bulwarks of our Zion. If we mistake not, many of these causes are perfectly tangible. We remind the champions of anarchy that there are such passions as VANITY, DISAPPOINTED AMBITION, LOVE OF PRE-EMINENCE, and REVENGE.

And in times like the present, of great and stirring public excitement, when every *quack* has his *nostrum* for the cure of the ills of the world, it is not surprising to find even religious empirics, in the warmth of their zeal for ecclesiastical changes, and, in the plenitude of their Wesleyan patriotism, though they may not sus-

pect it, endeavouring to introduce the spirit of worldly policy into questions purely religious.

One circumstance may be considered favourable even in the present stage of this concussion of public opinion. It is, that the mask is thrown off and there is now little disguise. Some of the most influential and uncompromising adherents of the *association*, have openly avowed their intention to *agitate* the connexion to its centre. This is honest, and their proceedings prove them to be sincere. We apprehend, however, that both the term and the threat contained in it, are somewhat novel in their application to a religious community ; but words are significant of things, and the adoption of the phrase clearly indicates from what school our opponents have taken their lessons : not, we fear, from that of Him who said, “ *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart* ; but in that of the great “ AGITATOR ” of a neighbouring island.

Whether this new method of settling religious controversies, and the nature of religious rights and privileges, savours of the spirit and wisdom of this world, or of that which is “ *from above* ” remains to be shown by the effect. When calm and dispassionate reason, grounded on an appeal to the authority of the word of God, is abandoned for associated violence, inflammatory appeals to the passions, and an organization of the multitude, with a view to effect great changes, the matter then assumes an unequivocal character, and is then, beyond suspicion—evil. If our notions of the genius and spirit of the gospel, as well as its written revelation, do not deceive us, Christianity cannot bear the rudeness of such assaults, and its holy and lovely character must be destroyed by them.

The institutions of religion are only valuable, as they tend to promote its own spirit, enjoyment, and practical observance. Both friends and foes have allowed that Methodism has hitherto been remarkable for this—that by the blessing of God, it has been instrumental in leading great numbers, both in this country and in distant lands, to the knowledge of Christ, and a state of joyous happiness both in life and death. To say the least, a system which has thus the broad seal of heaven affixed to its operations, should be touched,

and especially by its disciples and friends, with caution and jealous affection ; if not on account of the wisdom and scriptural purity of its economical arrangements, yet on account of the blessing which has hitherto been upon it, and the spiritual peace and safety of those who repose beneath its shadow.

As this moderation cannot now be hoped for, the conductors of the *Illuminator*, though with great reluctance, enter the stormy region of public debate, convinced that the time is fully come when an effort must be made to arrest the course of anarchy, and that in the place where the press is employed to disseminate the poison, the remedy ought to be provided : and, having deliberately entered the arena with no sinister motives ; but to serve the cause of truth, religion, and God, despite of difficulties, calumny, and reproach, they are resolved to the utmost of their ability, to hurl back the enemy's thunder on himself, and defend our Institutions for the sake of the benefits they confer on our people and the world ! In prosecuting this design, the objects proposed are few and simple :—

I.—It is intended to examine the proceedings of the confederacy, and also to vindicate the system of Methodism by the authority and rules of Scripture. With all our heart we say—let the Word of God be enthroned, and that which cannot endure its light sink into oblivion.

II.—Whilst various technicalities of Methodistical law are dwelt upon for the purpose of blinding the public, and establishing the charge of dishonesty and tyranny against those who are called upon to administer it, the nature of the constitution and the unity of the whole is totally lost sight of. It is, therefore, intended to bring out the *real*, and, as far as possible, the *whole* code of Methodist discipline, and show its bearing on this and all similar cases.

III.—As *exparte* statements must, in the nature of things, be false in the impression produced, it is the design of the conductors of the *Illuminator* to give a full and fair statement of facts, and thus to supply the defects, and correct the errors of the *Watchman's Lantern*. It may not be a very dignified task to follow the *murky* and *crooked* wanderings of that *deceptive* guide ; but duty calls, and—the call must be obeyed.

IV.—One of the weapons employed by the agitation is the defamation of character on the pretence that public men are public property :—the agitators are reminded that *they* also now emerge from the obscurity of private life, and become public men. On their own principle, therefore, their deeds are open to criticism ; and if, in self-defence, we become assailants in our turn, they can have no ground of complaint. But whilst we promise to throw the shield of protection around the character of pious and honourable men, we hope it may not be necessary to descend to personalities in opposing the views of our assailants—not that we fear them—but we fear breaking in upon the decencies and courtesies of life—and we especially fear sin in ourselves, or provoking it in others.

And, finally, as the members of our society are liable to have their minds greatly disturbed, their peace interrupted, and suspicions infused as to the soundness of that system which has hitherto fostered their piety, and afforded them the means of great enjoyment and usefulness, we hope to be able to afford them some assistance in establishing their confidence, and leading their minds to a calm and fixed determination to remain faithful. And whilst the friends of *old* Methodism would cordially receive again those who have *erred* and *strayed* from them, they must be aware that they owe a special obligation to those who remain. Our advice to them at present is :—Take no hasty step. Wait a-while. You have hitherto heard only one side of the question. You will now have the opportunity of hearing another. If, when you have *calmly*, *dispassionately*, and *prayerfully* examined the whole case, judge that it will be more edifying to your piety, honourable to your character, useful in life, and safe for your souls, to abandon the Wesleyan Methodist society—to unite with agitation and walk by the obscure light of a *Watchman's Lantern*, rather than in the broad light of that great truth, which you have professed and embraced—nothing remains for us but the exercise of tender pity for human weakness, and prayer to God for the bestowment of a sounder discretion, and more noble and elevated feeling.

ORIGINAL ANECDOTE

Of the late Rev. John Wesley ; communicated to the preachers assembled in Conference, at Liverpool, August, 1820, by the late Rev. Robert Miller.

The first time I had the pleasure of being in company with the Rev. John Wesley, was in the year 1783. I asked him what must be done to keep Methodism alive when he was dead? To which he immediately answered:—"The Methodists must take heed to their DOCTRINE—their EXPERIENCE—their PRACTICE—and their DISCIPLINE. If they attend to their *doctrines* only, they will make the people *antinomians*; if to the *experimental* part of religion only, they will make them *enthusiasts*; if to the *practical* part only, they will make them *Pharisees*; and if they do not attend to their *discipline*, they will be like persons who bestow much pains in cultivating their garden, and put no fence round it, to save it from the WILD BOAR of the forest."

THE SPIRIT OF THE FACTION.

"By their fruits ye shall know them," is a test of conduct rarely deceptive. We intend to judge of the spirit and works of the Faction now agitating the Methodist connexion, by this divine axiom.

As a first specimen, we present to our readers the literal copy of a hand bill, industriously circulated in the town of Sheffield, the day previous to a sermon being preached on account of some public charity:—

TO THE FRIENDS OF THE IMMACULATE ROBERT NEWTON.

The principal friends of modern Methodism, in Sheffield, highly approving of the meek, upright, and the purely Christian spirit in which the Rev. R. Newton conducted himself towards those vile brethren, the Rev. J. R. Stephens, the Rev. Dr. Warren, and the Rev. J. Bromley, have taken the earliest opportunity of publicly expressing their approbation of the whole of his conduct, by inviting him to preach at Brunswick chapel, on the evening of Tuesday, the 25th instant.

When all the supporters of despotism and priestcraft, the lovers of the corrupt, the unnatural, the unholy union of church and state, the friends and admirers of the Right Rev. Lord Bishop Bunting's Theological Institution—in a word, all who love Bunting and Slavery more than they love God and their Liberty—who will court the favour of liars, and flatter and foster the ambition of unprincipled tyrants, will do well to attend and support the eloquent lackey of an ambitious and priestly despot.

Yes, Methodists of Sheffield, go and hear the Rev. R. Newton, who has immortalized himself in the annals of infamy by the blackness of his treachery, the malignity of his spirit, and the baseness of his ingratitude, to one of his best friends and warmest admirers. In short, he has set at defiance the commands of God, trampled under his feet every thing that is pure and holy, and violated every principle of truth and honour, in order to blast the character of Mr. Bromley, and to please the Rev. Jabez Bunting.

To be serious, will you support such men, will you sanction such conduct, will you let your tyrants trample you under their feet? No! If you have the love of God within your hearts—if you value that liberty with which Christ has made you free—arouse yourselves, and with a voice loud as ten thousand thunders demand your rights and liberties.—November 22, 1834.

FIDES.

We leave this production to make its own impression, with one remark; it is this:—If the bland and amiable spirit, uniform Christian deportment, unsullied honor, laborious services "in season and out of season," together with kindness and courtesy towards all—whether rich or poor, which have rendered him next to universally beloved, could not protect the Rev. Robert Newton from so foul and diabolical an attack, let all *honest, honourable, and Christian* people judge of the *animus* of the faction, which could, in its cold-blooded malice, hurl the assassin's dart at a character so spotless and a name so endeared, not only to the Wesleyan connexion, but to the religious

public at large. And when they see behind the hollow professions of a superior liberality a dark and fiend-like plotting, to blight the usefulness of good men—to stop the current of private charity, and undermine all the institutions of the church—let them determine whether or not the time is come for them to unite in every place to frown down this unholy confederacy—protect the character of each other—vindicate the cause of God against this desecration of its purity—and throw around the institutions of the connexion the shield of their defence, by meeting manfully the assault of an enemy, more wicked—because less honourable—than the avowed opposition either of infidelity or the world.

THE CASE “WITHOUT A PARALLEL;”

Or, David Rowland and the late Leeds-street Leaders’ Meeting, Liverpool.

“ Their attack having been repulsed, and their charge converted into a retreat, they affect to forget that they were the assailants, and, with a meanness worthy of their presumption, they now complain of harshness and severity.”—*British Magazine*, 1834, p. 669.

“ The following case of Mr. Rowland, and the others of the Liverpool North Circuit, we venture to assert, is hitherto without a parallel in the annals of even Methodist despotism.”—*Lantern*, p. 4.

“ Thus ended a series of the most extraordinary exhibitions of arbitrary power, that ever disgraced the annals of Methodism, in which a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which publishes peace and good-will towards men, is found doing all he can, not to save souls, but to cut them off from communion with the Church of Christ, and again turn them over to the temptations and snares of the world.”—*Lantern*, p. 11.

That the “charge” was made by the very men who can now *whine* so very affectingly, is known to the town of Liverpool, and is pre-supposed by the proceedings narrated by themselves. They profess to give us an account of a “trial.” Now this is generally a thing which follows the commission of an offence. The transgressors are commonly the first in the march of criminal justice, and the executors of the law bring up the rear. So it was in this case. Private consultations were held, articles were published, large meetings were openly called, and the character of the preachers fiercely assailed. All this was done in a tone of the most bold and arrogant defiance. The cry of victory and triumph over the humbled preachers and fallen Methodism, was already raised. To be sure, it was a cruel thing to put such *meek*, *modest*, and *peaceable* people, on their “trial” at all! “Such a case,” they “venture to assert, is hitherto without a parallel in the annals of even Methodist despotism.” If so, the Methodists must have lived under a very lenient government.

That these trials were altogether *uncalled for* will not now be maintained. Even the members of the “association” allow that they have violated the laws of Methodism. Mr. Farrar, the chairman of the *illegal* association, when on his trial, admitted,

that the two institutions could not exist together. At the Leeds meeting, David Rowland, in his speech, after reading the rule of 1796, said, "do you want to know who has violated that law? I have; yes, I have, and I glory in it; and I would scorn to bear the name of an Englishman if I had not."* The parties who brought the matter forward in the leaders' meeting acted under the same impression. They knew that David Rowland had violated the law, and that he "gloried in it;" all hope of any thing like repentance and amendment was taken away; and, therefore, he was put upon his trial. The partizans of David Rowland will not hesitate to say, that his avowal of such a sentiment, in public, was a bold, noble, and meritorious action. But for persons in Liverpool to act upon the principle which he so solemnly avowed in Leeds, they "venture to assert, is hitherto without a parallel in the annals of even methodistic despotism!"

In order that the reader may be furnished with a key to the subsequent proceedings on this case, there is one fact which specially claims his attention. The culprit and the jury were accomplices, and perfectly understood one another! Even by the glimmering light of the *Lantern*, it will be seen that Brook and Co. sat upon Rowland's trial, and Rowland, though expelled, continued to sit upon their's. They "protested" against his expulsion, and, then, he, of course, as in duty bound, "protested" against their's in return. That a majority of the leaders were deeply pledged to the association is perfectly notorious. During the proceedings, indeed, the complainants who brought the charge objected to this very strange state of things, and ventured to suggest, that such leaders as could be proved to be *particeps criminis*, should retire from the rest, and leave the case to be decided by men of clean hands. This proposition was rejected with contempt! It was declared to be an *unconstitutional* interference with the "rights" of the leaders! They were utterly amazed that any man should imagine, even for a moment, that accomplices were not perfectly competent to act as jurors! The case must be tried by themselves or not at all. Yet the authors of this monstrous injustice, as if they had endured, instead of inflicting it, can now turn round and say, such are the injuries that we have received, that "we venture to assert, our case is hitherto without a parallel in the annals of even Methodistic despotism."

A jury of accomplices, trying a brother, would be very likely to find out a flaw in the indictment, or some other informality in the mode of procedure. So it actually came to pass. As soon as the charges against David Rowland had been read, an *honest* jurymen jumped up, and begged leave to ask, whether the direction

given by our Lord, in Matthew xviii, 15—17, had been strictly and literally observed? The plaintiff said that he had seen the accused person, and told him his fault between themselves alone. So far so good. But then, as he had not taken with him *one or two more*, it was submitted, that the case could not proceed. Another juryman (who was himself put upon his trial a fortnight after!) observed, with *vast solemnity*, that the objection was fatal, and therefore the case must fall to the ground. The ineffable hypocrisy of all this is indeed "*without a parallel*." The very men who, together with the other members of the association, had assailed the character of the Methodist preachers generally, and that of Mr. Bunting in particular, in every form that malignity can assume; but which of them ever complied with the direction—"go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone"? It seems, the race of men referred to by St. Matthew, chap. xxiii. 4, is not yet quite extinct:—"For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." In order that the offenders and their partizans might be left without excuse, they were allowed to have the thing in their own way. Accordingly, the complainant "took with him one or two more," and in the course of the following week, David Rowland was honoured with a visit by three gentlemen who, at any rate, were quite equal to himself. As men are generally pleased when their advice is followed, it was hoped that this proceeding would have given satisfaction. But no! As it was now apparent, that the evil day was only put off, and that, after all, the trial *must* proceed, this visit, so respectful in itself, and the very thing themselves had requested and prescribed, they now "venture to assert, is without a parallel, in the annals of even Methodistic despotism."

There is another method by which a jury may conveniently help an accomplice when on his trial before them, though it requires a little *impudence* to adopt it; and that is, by returning a verdict *before* the evidence has been heard. This grand expedient was tried at Leeds-street. The charge having been read, the *honest** juryman was instantly on his feet, to propose, that, "in the opinion of this meeting, the said charges are frivolous and vexatious." The motion was seconded by Brook, who was himself

* Our readers ought to know who the *conscientious* juryman is: he is none other than our worthy host of the White Lion, Dale-street, Liverpool; who has exhibited himself for some years among the advertisements of the Methodist Magazine, under the patronage of the names of the Rev. Messrs. Bunting and Stephenson; and in consequence of which his house has been the resort of the Methodists, of every grade, who were emigrating to America. The non-appearance of the advertisement in the Magazine for this month leads us to imagine that he is, *at length*, conscious his recent conduct and the auspices of those respectable names are in very sorry keeping.—Ed.

placed on his trial the following week (!) and therefore did not act without a reason. The proposition so moved and seconded was generally hailed by the meeting. Now, David Rowland was charged with being present at certain meetings : taking part in their proceedings, and especially with being connected with the association. All this might be very good, or it might be very bad. The quality of these acts depended upon what was said and done at the meetings in question, and what were the principles and objects of the association ; these points were to be ascertained by the evidence about to be adduced. But before *one* question was asked, or a *single* witness had opened his mouth, did this matchless jury propose the above resolution, as their *honest* and *conscientious* verdict. The *Lantern* says, page 5, "Mr. Jackson said, the motion was too hastily proposed." Why, to be sure, when jurymen intend to give a verdict according to the evidence, they generally think right to *hear* the evidence *first of all*. And a very high authority has said, (Prov. xviii, 13,) "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him." Of this "folly and shame" the chairman did not wish either himself or the meeting to be guilty, and therefore naturally observed, that the motion had been "too hastily proposed : " he refused to put it, and insisted on the evidence being heard *before* the verdict was given. Honest men would have freely chosen this course, and marked it out for themselves. Here it became a matter of compulsion, and is therefore complained of as a tyranny : for they "venture to assert, that the case is hitherto without a parallel in the annals of even Methodistical despotism."

There is no limit to human ingenuity ! This jury of accomplices sought to help a brother on his trial ; in the next place, by turning *sulky* ! Though abundantly ready to give a verdict *before* the evidence was heard, yet, not being permitted to do that, they then determined, after it was heard, to return no verdict at all ! The fact indeed of David Rowland's connection with the association had all the certainty that human eyes and ears could give, and was as notorious as the newspapers could make it ; but whether a majority of the leaders were convinced or unconvinced of its truth, is a matter at which we can only guess, as they observed a total silence on the subject. The question was asked, "Are the charges proved or not proved ?" But the great bulk of the hands were unlifted up either one way or other, just like the congregation of Elijah who *could not* open their mouth in defence of Baal, and *would not* open them in acknowledgment of the true God. So they were silent as death. "The people answered him not a word."—1 Kings xviii. 21.

Yet some half-dozen men could see no reason in the world why they should not believe a fact which scores could attest, and which no man had the hardihood to deny. Nor did they hesitate to declare their belief by holding up a hand ; this remnant of common honesty *spoiled* the whole affair. For when six hands were held up in affirmation of his guilt, and not a finger *presumed* to attest his innocence, the chairman was compelled to treat him as a convicted man. That a small minority should be convinced by irresistible evidence, that they should avow their belief in a fact which no living man denied or doubted, and that they should do all this, although a large majority did not choose to be convinced at all, or to speak at all, is doubtless intolerable tyranny, and loudly calls for a radical reform. The friends of the *Lantern*, of course, respect the rights of private judgment, but the daring conduct of this minority, they "venture to assert, is hitherto without a parallel in the annals of even Methodistical despotism !"

From these statements it will be seen, that the system of *sulkiness*, however plausible in theory, was not found to answer in practice, as it could not effectually prevent the conviction of the accused parties. In order to avoid this unpleasant result, when Brook and Co. were put upon their trial, this jury of accomplices determined that the perilous question of "guilty, or not guilty," should not be submitted to the meeting at all ! The evidence had been adduced in the midst of indescribable uproar and confusion, when the chairman proceeded to speak, in substance as follows :— " The names of these brethren have appeared in the newspaper. " as members of the managing committee of the ' associations. ' " If this was done with their own consent, they belong to that " body, and the charge is proved. If not, a forgery has been committed by somebody, and the ' association ' has been practising " an imposition upon the public. The *accused* will say nothing " on the subject themselves, as they refuse to plead ; you will, " therefore, say by your vote, which of these two things, in your " judgment, is according to truth." Before this statement could be concluded, the chief actors were on their feet, in a state of the most violent excitement, and " I object to that question," and, " It shan't be put—it shan't be put," were vociferated in every direction. To prevent the possibility of such an obnoxious question going to the meeting, a *new* chairman was called for, who immediately began to exercise the functions of his office ! As to the poor superintendent preacher, after having been loaded with *insult* and *abuse*, for hours together, he was now formally rejected, and was, therefore, compelled to retire. Yet these *fierce* and *lawless* men, now speak of themselves as prodigies of *innocence* and *suffering* ! Their case, they " venture to assert, is hitherto

without a parallel in the annals of even Methodistical despotism!"

These agents of the "association" believed themselves born to set the Conference right, and to guide the Methodist connexion, and, by way of showing the world how well they were qualified to fill the situation to which they aspire, they commit an act of *official suicide*! A body of leaders, without a preacher at its head is unknown to Methodism. It can claim no privilege. It is entitled to no protection. As the expelled superintendent deemed it his duty to give *them* no further trouble, they were, of course, informed by the trustees, that they could no longer be suffered to assemble on the trust premises! The meetings have since been held at the Pilot-office, in the Old Church-yard. After declaring a hundred times that they were officers in the Methodist society, and that no power on earth should put them out, they have fairly excluded themselves!! Solomon says,*—"He that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death." The *official death* of these men is the necessary result of the principles by which they were actuated, and the courses they have long pursued. The borough was so utterly *rotten*, it was impossible to keep it out of Schedule A, for, in the absence of other agency, it has disfranchised itself by the operation of its own incurable wickedness!

After the expulsion of one of these gentlemen, he stood up and informed the meeting how exceedingly *happy* he felt in his own mind! Expulsions are like imprisonments in their effects on human character. A youthful offender, on his way to the house of correction, for the first time, will be a little troubled; that trouble will be sensibly abated on his second visit, and no wonder if he feel quite comfortable during the ceremony of a third committal. When a *certain*† youth was put out of society, for the first time, at Chester,

* Proverbs, xi.—19.

† Our worthy correspondent need not have been so *mealy-mouthed* respecting this *youth*(!); we can assure him that he is no *chicken* in concocting schemes of agitation and discord: he can receive the smart birchings of an ecclesiastical *rod*, with all the *non-chalance* of an old offender, and, like many an evil-omened bird, his voice is heard only at the approach of foul weather! He is not only well known at the Pilot office, Liverpool, and at the Bootle Water Works, but his name *smells* rather *strong* in the firm of a linen-draper at Chester, well known to the Methodist circles;—it has also an equally *high flavour* in the family of the late Mr. S., formerly of Birkenhead, both of whom have suffered by his *tricks*. With such a man (*youth* indeed!) among the *leaders* of the *illegal* "association," we are by no means surprised at the loud complaints we hear of the *abominable trickery* which they are still practising on the religious world.—This man (*youth*!) talks vociferously about the *purity* of his character, of which he would appear as jealous as a maiden of her fame. We advise him to forbear; or we shall, ere long, from a multiplicity of documents already in our possession, fully discharge our duty as *Illuminators*, and, without fear or favour, throw such a flood of light upon certain parts of his history, which he and his *coterie* must devoutly wish were "shrouded in Egyptian darkness." Deluded soul! if he is still panting for publicity and popularity, we promise him *quantum sufficit*—to his heart's content.—Ed.

(he knows what for) the event would perhaps be felt to be an affliction ; when afterwards reproved by Mr. Newton, in the Mount Pleasant Vestry, by order of the leaders' meeting, he would suffer still less. At present, he is so far advanced that an expulsion does not at all disturb his *habitual* tranquillity ! Like the fox in the fable, who had lost his tail, he wishes it to be understood, that the happiest Methodists in the world are those who have been expelled the society. People of blighted characters will, perhaps, become converts to such a doctrine ; and it may be some *relief* to the Methodist preachers to know, that with all their "tyranny," they occasion but little misery, for even a state of expulsion is perfectly *delectable* !

As the retired leaders are fond of telling tales, we give the following as a specimen of the accuracy with which this is done, and to shew the necessity of caution in receiving them. In a note, addressed to the superintendent by themselves, on the 18th Dec. it is stated, that they found "the vestry door closed against" them.* The fact was, on that evening, the vestry was never closed at all ! They entered, as usual, without the slightest obstruction ; the note itself was read and approved in the vestry ; they stayed as long as it was thought proper, and went away when they pleased. Yet they "venture to assert," the vestry door was closed against them !

A solemn protest has been signed by these men against the conduct of the superintendent preacher, as *unmethodistical*, *unconstitutional*, and *unjust* ; and we suppose it is for this : that they have since invited him, by letter, more than once, to come and preside at their several meetings ; for certainly, if it be his character, they cannot have a more suitable head. Having foretold that the time is at hand, when "no honest man can remain connected with" the Methodist preachers, they think the prediction will be partly fulfilled, when one of that body is placed in the Pilot-office, or in the Music Hall, and surrounded by themselves.

Miscellanea.

GENERAL DECLARATION OF THE METHODIST PREACHERS.

THIS document we are happy to say has just reached us. It furnishes a most triumphant refutation of the abominable slander which has been so industriously disseminated by the *illegal* "association" ; that "a considerable number of the preachers in the Methodist connexion are *secretly* inclined to a change in the essential principles of our constitution, and that they are only waiting for a favourable opportunity of declaring the

* In referring to the *DARK Lantern*, we read, p. 30,—“On Thursday evening, the 18th of December, the leaders assembled in the vestry of Leeds-street chapel, *as usual* !” The letter to which our correspondent refers is dated, “Leeds-street vestry ;” and yet our *veracious* host of the *White Lion*, Dale-street, Liverpool, commits to paper the glaring falsehood, that “the vestry door is closed against the leaders and stewards.”—
ED.

sentiments which they have long cherished." No man or number of men who had a character that was *worth keeping*, would have *staked* their reputation on such an assertion. It is a most diabolical falsehood! Deny it who can! This "declaration," which is still in a course of signature (as the brethren in some of the extensive and distant circuits have not had time to transmit their answers) has already received the names of not less than EIGHT HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THREE Preachers, who publicly announce that such an insinuation as the above, is an "impeachment of their character not only as a body of christian ministers, but as upright men." Nevertheless, with an assurance unparalleled in the annals of impudence, this *illegal* "association" has published an address "to the members of the Conference," forsooth, who are "unwilling parties to its infractions of the constitution of Methodism," and which bears marks of the ravings of a maniac, more than the sound reasonings of a man who is sincerely intent upon *leaving the world better than he found it*. If report says true, it is the production of a love-sick youth, whose head is full of the nonsense he has scraped together from novels and other trash, of which it is said he is passionately fond. Like Hotspur's fop, "he talks like a waiting-gentlewoman of guns and drums and wounds;" for what, in the name of common sense, have the following to do with his address to certain disaffected preachers, which his feverish and over-excited brain dreams are *now* to be found in the Conference—and who cowardly shrunk from declaring their own opinion on the present state of affairs in Methodism: viz. "present explosion of public opinion"!—"combustible materials long collecting"!—"application of the match to the train"!—"not the explosion of a few shells"!—"the explosion of the contents of a *magazine*"!—"a mine has been sprung"!—"hostile turrets quivering"!—"citadels tottering to their fall"!—Heaven defend us!—but we have given enough of these maniacal effusions. Infatuated boy! does he really think, with his equally infatuated admirers, any Methodist preacher will prove himself such a compound of folly and madness as seriously to listen for a moment to such *rhapsodic stuff*? Our grave advice is—more to the friends of the youth than to himself personally—that a *kind companion* be constantly about him, that all weapons by which he may injure himself be studiously kept out of his reach, and that his medical adviser be in immediate attendance; otherwise we tremble for the result.

STOKESLEY, AND THE SO CALLED "METHODIST ASSOCIATION."

It is generally known that the above unauthorised association has, through its secretary, a Mr. W. Wood, of Manchester, forwarded a circular to various circuits in the Wesleyan connexion, addressed to the stewards, calling upon them, in very *affectionate* and *brotherly* strains, to strengthen their hands in the work of agitation and dissension, by forming branch associations in their respective neighbourhoods; all of which shall have one object in view—to disturb the peace of the connexion, by destroying that confidence which ought ever to subsist between the pastor and his flock, and by withholding support to those funds of the Methodist body, which, in their operation, have been so remarkably blessed by the Great Head of the Church, in the conversion of men from sin to holiness, until their unholy and overturning purposes are realized.

It will be highly gratifying to our readers to learn, that a vast proportion of those circuits to whom these inflammatory addresses were sent manifested through their various officers a spirit worthy of him whose name they bear;—and answers were returned to Mr. Secretary, which were calculated (if his conscience were not too much "seared,") to make him *rue* the day that ever he embarked in an enterprise so wild and reckless. The following reply was received by this Mr. Wood, from the stewards of the Stokesley circuit.

SIR,—We duly received your circular letter, addressed to the circuit-stewards of the Wesleyan society, Stokesley. Nothing but the pressure of business prevented our giving it an answer the day it arrived. We observe, with surprise and sorrow, that a quarterly meeting of the Manchester first circuit has assumed to itself the right of choosing a

superintendent, setting aside the authority of a district meeting, and imposing laws on the Conference. After thus discarding all legitimate authority, it ceases to be matter of astonishment that the same meeting has not feared to arrogate the prerogative of the Supreme Judge of all, and to vote the conduct of his ministers "disgraceful to their character, and unrighteous *in the sight of God.*"

In reference to the "Grand Central Union," we have only, as private members, to say—"Oh my soul come not thou into their secret, and unto their assembly mine honor be not thou united." If any member of our quarterly meeting wish to have the question discussed, we promise you we will do our best to obtain him a fair hearing, and we have little fear of our esteemed superintendent refusing to put any resolution, "not contrary to the rules and usages of the body." We have, however, the pleasure of assuring you, that the misguided agitation you mention has not reached us. We are thankful for the tranquillity and union we enjoy, and have no expectation that any member of our societies will desire to exchange the superintendence of the Conference for the dominion of a self-constituted association, which has nothing to offer but a *church without discipline, and preachers without education.*

We are sorry to find you recommending our brethren to withhold their pecuniary supplies till your plans are submitted to by Conference. Christian beneficence, then, it seems, is to be no more a generous and self-denying virtue, founded on the love of God and man, but a selfish contrivance for purchasing personal power in the church. Christ is to be honored, and his people's wants supplied, when our private views are gratified; but when other counsels are followed, then his aged ministers are to be deserted and his missions abandoned. So then, while the people are aiming at all the power, the Conference are to be solely interested in the cause, and solely responsible for its success!

We beg, however, to suggest the propriety of your explaining in your next circular, how it happens that your circuit has "tacitly acknowledged the duty" of supporting ministers whose conduct it denounces as "disgraceful and unrighteous in the sight of God," and yet has not tacitly acknowledged the duty of supporting expensive missions and schools, with which it has no fault to find and which were undertaken on the reasonable expectation that the usual supplies would be continued?

We further suggest to you the propriety of explicitly disclaiming all part in the disgraceful outrage upon Mr. Newton, in two of your chapels, on the sabbath day, and in the exercise of his ministry; and of your expressing to him the deep regret which we have no doubt, you feel that so painful a circumstance should have occurred under the pretext of your principles.

We fear it would be unreasonable to ask you also to explain how you reconcile your avowed object and the means by which it to be carried into execution, with your professed *attachment to Methodism, love of peace and unity, dislike to innovation, and concern for spiritual religion.*—We are,

Your obedient servants,

THOS. MEASE, } Circuit
JOHN BLACKET. } Stewards.

Stokesley, 1st. Dec. 1834.

SHEFFIELD, AND THE SO CALLED "METHODIST ASSOCIATION."

At a Meeting of Trustees, Stewards, and Leaders of the Wesleyan Society, Sheffield East, held in the Band-room of Brunswick Chapel, on Tuesday Evening, Nov. 25th, 1834, the following Resolution was passed, and ordered to be printed and circulated forthwith:—

Resolved—That we, the undersigned, being Trustees, Stewards, and Leaders, in the Sheffield East Circuit, view with feelings of deep regret and indignation the base and violent measures now employing, under deceitful and covert pretences, to alienate the members of our Society, to overturn the Constitution of Methodism, and to calumniate and malign the character and conduct of our beloved Ministers generally, and of some in particular who from their lengthened, consistent, and meritorious labours, are especially deserving of the confidence and affectionate support of the connexion at large. We feel ourselves, in consequence, called upon publicly and decidedly to express our firm and unshaken attachment to the Constitution of Methodism, as it now exists, and as it has been handed down to us by our Fathers. We do, therefore, determine to

resist, to the utmost of our power, the attempts at innovation which are now making, and which are in many instances instigated by men who have no connexion with the body, but who nevertheless are actuated by the most inveterate hostility to its interests. And we further avow our unshaken attachment to and confidence in our Ministers, in whose labours we rejoice, and for whom we fervently implore the grace and blessing of Almighty God.

Signed by Fifty-two Official Members of the Methodist Society.

"GOOD FARMER DAWSON."—The excellent and sensible letter which this deservedly popular local preacher addressed to *poor* Dr. Warren, has been published in a separate form under the title of "*More work for Dr. Warren.*" As soon as our circumscribed limits will permit, we intend to give the letter, for the benefit of our readers; who will then judge for themselves, whether Mr. Dawson be not too *doughty* a champion for either the *sapient* editor of the *DARK Lantern*, or his *recanting* protégé to encounter.—The former, in page 31 of his *mendacious* publication, instead of offering anything in the shape of an answer to the queries with which the good farmer's epistle abounds, contents himself with following the example of many a *mongrel cur*, springing out of some dark cellar, in the inferior parts of Liverpool,—follows the passenger and tries to bite his heel! "He hates the excellency he cannot reach." But what will our readers think of the gratuitous advice which our editor gives the "farmer," on the last day of the year 1834?—Why, "to tend his hay-cocks and shear his sheep in peace"! Every man of the plough in the land will at once set such an adviser down to be a madman—or a *child* still in the bondage of his leading-strings!

JUST PUBLISHED :

SECOND EDITION, PRICE SIXPENCE, WORK FOR DR. WARREN.

I fear the evil worst when gown or cassock,
Or, in lack of them, old Calvin's cloak
Conceals the base design.

ANON.

LONDON: J. Mason, 14, City-road, and 66, Paternoster-row. LIVERPOOL: R. Dickinson, 67, Pool-lane. MANCHESTER: Love and Barton, Market-street.

"The correctness of its statements, and the literal application of most of its animadversions, are not to be denied. The mistaken position in which Dr. Warren has placed himself is much to be regretted, and that others should have been persuaded into the same erroneous views still more so. But truth will prevail: its edge is not to be turned by special pleading, nor its force to be broken by the flimsy webs of artifice. To make an impression by his feeble efforts upon the solid fabric of Methodism, or to make impartial minds believe that he is in the right and not in the wrong, or that his efforts are for the benefit, and not for the injury of the general cause, will indeed be "*work for Dr. Warren.*"—*Liverpool Courier*, Dec. 17th, 1834.

Crowther's Defence of the Theological Institution, &c. price Sixpence.

Cubitt's Observations on Dr. Warren's Remarks, &c. price Sixpence.

Vever's Appeal to the Wesleyan Societies on the attempt made to subvert their Constitution, price Sixpence.

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Work for Dr. Warren. Second Edition. Price Sixpence.

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TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

No. 2. LIVERPOOL, JAN. 21, 1835. **Price 1½d.**

AN EARNEST APPEAL

*To the Members of the Wesleyan Methodist Societies in the Town
of Liverpool, on the Anarchy introduced by the Members of
the so called "Grand Central Association."*

MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST SOCIETIES!—We appeal to you not merely as persons deeply interested in the state of religion in your own church, but as candid witnesses of the distrust, confusion, and evil, introduced into these peaceful societies, and of the truth of the following *exposé* of the spirit and proceedings of the anarchists.

We remind you that these transactions ought to be judged of by the spirit and precepts of the word of God: innumerable passages of scripture inculcate a spirit of love, unity, and harmonious effort to promote the holy and grand designs of Christian fellowship, in mutual edification and the extension of religion in the world. One of the last injunctions of our Lord to his disciples was that of brotherly love; and, to give effect to it, he instances it as a new commandment: "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."—John, xiii., 34, 35. The great head of the church not only represents the spirit and the unity of love as a great religious duty; but, as having suspended upon it, the greatest practical consequences—his acknowledgment by the world and its consequent salvation. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me—I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and

hast loved them as thou hast loved me.”—John, xvii., 21, 23. Indeed, the witness of the church for Christ is not only *oral* by their confession of faith, but it is *practical* as well. No voice is so loud—so tender—and so touching, as love, in support of religion, and the concentrating of this spirit, its holy beauty, its silent testimony, and its energetic labours, would soon give to our diyine religion that ascendancy which it ought to have in the world, but which the wretched divisions of the church have hitherto so awfully retarded.

The writings of St. Paul breathe the most tender solicitude respecting the unity of the churches; and by the inspiration of the holy spirit, command the members of the primitive church to avoid all occasions of strife and division. To the Corinthian church he writes:—“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no *divisions* among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloë, that there are *contentions* among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or, were ye baptised in the name of Paul?”—Chap. i. 10, 11, 12. “For whereas there is among you *envying*, and *strife*, and *divisions*, are ye not carnal and walk as men?”—Chap. iii. 3. He speaks in similar language to the other churches. To the Ephesians—“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love: endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”—Chap. iv. 1—6, and 11—16. To the Philippian church—“If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind, let nothing be done through strife and vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem the other better than themselves. Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not ran in vain, neither la-

boured in vain.”—Chap. ii., 1, 2, 3—14, 15, 16. To the Colossians—“Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; if any man hath a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you so also do ye. And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”—Chap. iii., 12—15. In various parts of his writings he enjoins the disciples to avoid all such as cause *contentions* and *divisions*. To the Romans he says—“Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause *divisions* and *offences*, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by *good words* and *fair speeches* deceive the hearts of the simple.”

One thing is very plain, viz.—that the spirit of these passages and the duty involved in them, have been grossly outraged by one of the two parties in Liverpool. The bond of union previously existing has been severed—brotherly affection has been superseded by bickerings, jealousies, and hard speeches, and the peaceful waters which rolled in our sanctuaries have become turbid and agitated. Instead of that cordial affection and confidence which, in a very high degree, marked our fellowship, we now see afloat the elements of discord, drifted by currents of contending passion, and, it is to be feared, that a great length of time must intervene before any thing like settled peace can again reign in these once united societies.

The sin of this disruption lies *somewhere*, and you—the intelligent and impartial members of the Methodist societies, know in your consciences that the parties who opened the sluices, and let in the waters of discord amongst us, are the party who formed the “association.” They are the men who introduced matters of strife, and dared to violate the Christian unity, order, peace, and communion of the Methodist church in this place, in opposition to the express injunction of the Word of God, and the profession they had taken on themselves. We do for ourselves, for the ministers of these two circuits, and in behalf of those officers and friends who have continued faithful to their engagements, avow, that instead of seeking, coveting, or promoting this state of things, we have done all in our power to guard against it; and declare in the presence of the world and of God, that we are not directly or indirectly, the authors of this lamentable state of evil. We boldly and publicly charge the agitators of our societies with the awful crime of intentionally breaking in upon the peace of the church; sowing seeds of disunion—outraging the spiritual comfort of our

people—endangering their salvation—and throwing the shadow of night over our fair and bright prospects—to promote objects, which on their own confession, cannot justify the means employed. We consider an incendiary who sets fire to his neighbour's house deserving of the severest punishment, not merely because he destroys his property, but because he endangers the lives of the family. It is in vain for him to say in excuse, that the laws which elevate the victim of his vengeance to respectability and leave him in poverty are unequal! Nothing, it is felt, can vindicate so great an outrage on the security of civilized life; then—what are we to think of the guilt of the men who, with the torch of discord, set the house of God on fire! Is this a less offence than the one referred to? Admitting that the church thus disturbed is a real church of God, that its doctrines are pure—its communion scriptural—its state allowing for human infirmities—spiritual and holy, and its ordinances crowned with the Divine presence and blessing; we say, admitting these things to be true, we cannot but believe in our conscience, that to throw it into a state of disorder and anarchy such as we now witness, IS THE GREATEST WICKEDNESS OF WHICH MAN IS CAPABLE. The common vices of human nature shrink into insignificance of the lowest degree, when compared with that callous, calculating, and murderous mental sin, which can coolly rend asunder the ties of Christian brotherhood, separate and divide the societies, and obstruct the progress of the Word of God. It is with deep emotion and grief that our pen records the sentiment we feel, that the blood of souls will deeply stain the skirts of the authors of this state of anarchy and evil. Another important principle to be kept in mind is, that a prosperous state of religion is the immediate work of God. In such a state, he must live in its ordinances, bless them in their successful administration, and, by his own act and grace, bestow all the privileges enjoyed by its disciples. It follows then, that to take measures either ignorantly or wickedly, to injure such a work, is presumptuously and profanely to injure that which has not only received his blessing, but also that which is the fruit of his own operation, by the influence of the holy spirit.

We appeal to you, our christian brethren, whether previously to the introduction of this state of anarchy, the great Head of the Church had not blessed us with most of the evidences of a state of comparative, if not absolute, prosperity? Mutual confidence existed, the officers of society performed the duties of their trust with united energy, the meetings for business were held in perfect harmony, and the whole machinery of the church moved in concert to accomplish the great designs of our spiritual fellowship.

No note of discord had been heard between the preachers and other officers of the church, and members of the society ; and, if expressions are to be taken as the index of thought and feeling, all parties in these societies were equally satisfied and happy.

Besides this, the ordinances of religion were not left destitute of the scriptural evidences of the divine presence and approbation. The spirit of prayer was given in a very eminent measure to many who engaged in this exercise ; numerous seekers of salvation at different times entered into the liberty of the people of God ; an almost universal thirst for an increase of grace and holiness appeared to be felt by the society ; an ardent and lively faith, as to the salvation of souls, the larger effusions of the holy spirit and the triumphs of the gospel, was manifest in zealous efforts to promote these objects. If this is not the work of God, then religion is a delusion ! A church which ministers the gospel in "power and not in word only," can present numberless trophies of pardoning love and converting grace ; it administers in its ordinances peace and edification to believers, and leads them on to purity and holiness ; and it can only do this by the immediate sanction and agency of God. We do not affirm on our own independent authority that this was the state of things, but we appeal to you, who are eye-witnesses, and the persons to whom our description relates, whether, in the main, it is not accurate. If true, it follows that the Methodist connexion is not so corrupt as to cause God to depart from its ordinances, or to withdraw the grace of his good and holy spirit. Whatever others may think and say respecting religion being an accident, an excitement, and the fanaticism of weak minds, you, our beloved brethren, who enjoy its privileges, know that it is the work of God. Then what shall we think of the men who can deliberately break in on this state of holy and prosperous tranquillity ? We can easily conceive how infidels or mere men of the world might consistently plant their hostile batteries for the purpose of demolishing the citadel of God, but how men professing to regard religion as his work can dare to adopt means with an express design of throwing his church into confusion and agitation, to the manifest injury of all its interests, and the probable ruin of many souls, is a secret we cannot divine. If they can calmly reflect on the account to be given to him who redeemed the souls of these ruined men with his own blood, and must finally be the judge of all, they are in possession of an obtuseness or hardihood, which we have little ambition to share.

"But all are not Israel who are of Israel." It was well known in the midst of our general tranquillity and peace, from the best of all evidence—the evidence of their whole life—that a few, and but

a few men in the societies, though seeming to share the common good, were waiting for a pretext, no matter of what description, to resume the work of agitation and mischief. It is evident that the growing stability and prosperity of the Wesleyan connexion has long been to them a subject of sickening disgust; what they profanely call "a providential opening" was only necessary to be made by some accidental trifle, no matter where, for them to put off their assumed peaceful demeanour, and instantly to sound the shrill note of disturbance and war. As birds of prey flap their wings to the wind, screech in the storm, and wait with ferocious eagerness to fasten their talons and fatten on the spoils of death, so these lovers of discord and confusion have no sooner the opportunity, than with instinctive avidity, and natural pleasure, they hasten to the work of destruction, revel in the confusion they have occasioned, and trumpet forth their exploits as achievements of merit and glory—so true it is that "where the carcase falleth, there the eagles gather themselves together."

It may perhaps deduct somewhat from the vanity and self-complacency of these champions of desolation, to be told that no great wisdom is necessary to do evil, and the greater confusion and mischief they are able to accomplish, the more complete is their identity with him, who, "as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour." Let these sons of discord know, that destruction is an easy task—that any ruthless barbarian can disjoint the stones of the most splendid edifice, though it required the genius of a Wren or Smirke, to raise it—that the most thriftless driveller in factious folly, may, by fair speeches and patriotic pretences, sow suspicion in the minds of our societies, although it required the sanctified labours of Wesley and his able coadjutors to found them; and that whilst the wisdom, the goodness, and the omnipotence of God, combined to create this great universe, to form man a transcript of his own image, and after adorning paradise with its beauties and making it the abode of happiness and life, it only required "the serpent more subtle than any of the beasts of the field," to tempt man to sin—to poison the stream of life—turn Eden into a wilderness—and the world into a field of blood! (*To be concluded in our next.*)

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

A day or two ago, I heard that a publication was about to be issued, termed the *Illuminator*, and I must acknowledge that the title, at least, pleased me; for so many publications have lately issued from the press, on the conflicting subject connected with the present disputes among the Methodists, that I wished for *light*. As for the *Watch-*

man's Lantern; (which is a title assumed by a pamphlet recently published) I must acknowledge that my hopes are not very sanguine of receiving much illumination from it. The lantern of a watchman is often rendered dark *designedly*; and, at other times, though the *bull's eye* may be of good glass, yet the oil is often *impure*—the wick not true to the pipe—and the lantern, instead of giving a clear, steady light, is often full of smoke or soot, and the smell foul and offensive. Besides, sir, the *Watchman's Lantern* is to assist him in discovering persons who are not generally very partial to the light of day; and who, I ask, are so likely to assist in that business as those who have been associates with such characters in their deeds of darkness? I shall, therefore, leave the *Lantern* to its darkness, and address myself to you.

I have been reading the first number of the above-mentioned *Lantern*, which naturally led me to the following reflections: I find that Messrs. Rowland, Shirley, Farrer, and Widdows have been expelled from the Methodist society, in Liverpool, and that those gentlemen are highly offended on that account. However, on examining a number of resolutions which those respectable gentlemen published in the newspapers a few weeks ago, I find they have there affirmed, that no honest and upright man can remain in the Methodist society, as it is now constituted. Why, then, do they grieve on account of being expelled? Surely no conscientious and upright man ought reluctantly to leave a society where there is not an honest man to be found. However, I shall leave it to those gentlemen to solve that difficulty; it is evident that they would have gladly remained in that society, notwithstanding all its *vileness*, if they had not been legally expelled!

But here, sir, another difficulty arises: so extremely unwilling were they to leave this *dishonest* company, that they now say, they have been expelled *illegally*. I find in reading their own publication, that there is the following law in Methodism:—"Let no man, nor number of men, in our connexion, on any occasion, circulate letters, call meetings, do, or attempt to do, any thing new, till it has been appointed by the Conference." The preamble of a law generally assigns the reason why such a law is enacted. I ask, why have the gentlemen left out the preamble—or according to the Conference mode, the question? I suppose, it did not suit their purpose, and therefore I insert it here:—"Question 39—WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT UNRULY OR UN-THINKING MEN FROM DISTURBING OUR PEOPLE?" Really, sir, these characters are so clearly and accurately described in the question, that I am not surprised at their having left it out of the *Lantern*.

The individuals who have been expelled seem disposed to quarrel with the law by which they were excluded. This is perfectly natural. We seldom find in criminal courts, convicted and condemned culprits, approving the laws by which they were sentenced to punishment. In the trials which have recently taken place in the Liverpool Methodist society, there is something of the same nature. A private member reads over the ordinary rules for a member of society and because he does not find there the law which is enacted against illegal associations any more than a law against forgery, he demands to be tried only by them. A leader reads over the rules which apply to such officers in the society, and not finding there the law above referred to, demands to be tried only as a leader; and a local preacher peruses the rules pertaining to that class of men in the church, and not discerning the above regulation there, he complains that he is not tried by a jury of local preachers. What is the bearing of all this, but that a local preacher deems a leaders' meeting too mean a tribunal for him? and also, though he may violate the laws of a member of society, he ought to continue acting as a local preacher? Such quibbling is utterly unworthy any person professing godliness! There are laws for the regulation of the conduct of mayors and magistrates; but if a mayor or magistrate be placed at the bar, charged with sedition, would it avail him to say to the judge, "I demand to be tried by the laws which regulate the conduct of magistrates, and not by the common law for private subjects!" Such an appeal would not only be ineffectual, but meet with merited repulse.

What is the grand object to be accomplished by all the contention and strife which is now promoted? Why are public meetings held in Music and Town Halls—as in Bolton, Leeds, Liverpool, &c.? Why are the corners of the streets placarded with large bills respecting Methodism? Why are deputations appointed to harangue the populace in our large commercial towns; and by a show of hands determine concerning

the church of God: no matter whether the hand held up, be that of a pious, uniform Christian, or the hand of the most abandoned drunkard and libertine in the town; the majority of hands raised, is to determine important questions connected with the church of a meek and lowly Jesus?

The public may judge of the object of the agitators, and of their wisdom in legislating; when they are informed, that out of the three grand ends to be attained by the "central association," so called, one is—that the preachers, when assembled in Conference, shall vote by ballot. The avowed design of this wonderful regulation is, that they may vote unfettered and unbiassed by any dominant party; and that no man may know how his brother votes! But to secure righteous ballots, another of their equally wise regulations is, that four hundred strangers are to be admitted to sit in the gallery, in perfect silence, to see that all the preachers ballot righteously! Most wonderful legislators! Let the central association govern the Methodist connexion, and we shall undoubtedly have wise laws! Certainly they do not commence with the wisdom of Solomon, and I am persuaded that neither the Conference nor the members of our society will renounce the wise plans of Mr. Wesley, to place themselves under their jurisdiction. I only lament, (to use St. Paul's language) "that, by good words and fair speeches, they deceive the hearts of the simple." After all, I cannot but pity the men; they have wandered out of the way of peace—they have brought trouble into their families and into their own souls, while they are awfully disturbing the peace of our Zion.

Some of them may imagine they are too deeply pledged as ringleaders, to withdraw from the faction; but others, who have been misled by such ringleaders, would do well to renounce a scheme fraught with so much mischief—and which, in all probability, will terminate in the everlasting ruin of many precious souls. Peaceable societies are already divided into parties—the husband has been set against the wife, and the wife against her husband—parents against children, and children against parents. The avowed determination of the faction is, to proceed in that bad work; as one of the chief of them declared, a few days ago—"I will agitate—I will agitate to the very centre!"

That the God of Peace may restore peace to our disturbed societies, is the prayer of

A LOVER OF METHODISM.

P.S.—I have heard that a love feast has been held at the Music Hall, on the Lord's day, and that Mr. David Rowland was in the chair. Now, sir, the line of demarcation is fairly fixed; and the question to every pious, thoughtful member of the Methodist society in Liverpool is—"Shall I be a Wesleyan Methodist, or shall I be a ROWLANDITE?"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

SIR—I was much gratified some time ago by receiving an intimation that a periodical was about to be commenced "to expose the spirit and principles of the so called Grand Central Association," and, I may add, to act in some degree as an antidote to the poison which is attempted to be infused into the minds of the artless and unsuspecting through the medium of the paper which acts as the official organ of the above-named "association;" and, sir, I must confess, I was no less gratified by a perusal of your pages. Such a publication for some time has been a great *desideratum*. With regard to those subjects which are now agitating the Methodist world, I will not say much. If Methodism needs reforming, surely those who have undertaken that work are not the proper men to accomplish it. Is our constitution to be subject to the revisal of men who scruple not wilfully to pervert the truth? Are our laws to be remodelled by men who, in the framing of their own resolutions, commit such blunders as are apparent in those of the Central Association? I answer, Certainly not.

And, sir, those who wish the system of Methodism to remain as it is, are not only the most numerous, but, so far as we are able to judge, the most intelligent, and the most disposed to support that system. It cannot be supposed that the preachers will abandon the great mass of the people whose attachment has been tried, and whose friendship is steady, for the sake of pleasing those whose attachment, to say the least, is doubtful. But I conclude. On some future occasion, I may resume the task. My design on the present occasion was to testify my pleasure at the commencement of your paper, in which sentiment numbers will join me. Wishing you success on your undertaking,—I remain, yours truly,

PHILALETHERS.

Manchester, Jan. 12th, 1835.

SPIRIT OF THE FACTION.

We have not hesitated in our first number to refer to the *abominable trickery* which had been practised by the *illegal* "association." We now present our readers with one specimen from a many which we have in the back ground, and which shall also soon serve our purposes by throwing light on some of the *curtain* manœuvres of this motley combination. When the sanguinary Jehu was prosecuting his schemes of *désolation* and bloodshed, one great object which he had in view, was to obtain the sanction of a certain influential and great man of his day called Jehonadab, who was in great repute among the people. Jehu treated him with a ride in his carriage, and paid him very great attention and respect, to the intent that the people might come with facility to the conclusion that Jehu certainly was right, otherwise Jehonadab would not have countenanced him with his company, while prosecuting his blood-thirsty schemes. Just so is it with these association men. Our people are too powerfully attached to the excellent constitution and discipline of Methodism to be drawn aside by every silly adventurer in Methodistical politics; of this fact, these disturbers of the peace of our Zion are fully aware, and, therefore, they find it necessary to proceed with all the caution and wariness of the midnight plunderer, who is convinced that the success of his predatory movements depends altogether on the plots which he has artfully laid, and the promptitude, secrecy, and vigour with which they are carried into operation. To obtain the names of certain preachers who were well known in the neighbourhood, which they might attach to their projects of discord and revolution, was certainly a great *desideratum* with these honest, upright, and conscientious men. How to obtain the sanction and consent of those preachers to whom they might direct their attention, for a moment led them to hesitate; nevertheless, on the principles which they have laid down and recommended to others, they did not *boggle* long. Everlastingly are they ringing the changes on a certain passage which they have found in some of the fugitive productions of John Pawson:—"Remember, O ye "Methodists! that the reign of Popery is past and gone; let it "never be restored among you in any shape and name. In the "name of him who bought you with his blood, maintain the rights "and liberties of your own consciences;"—this they quote, as though the expression were intended to refer to, or as if it had any connection with, circumstances similar to those, which, in a *few* isolated spots, are now agitating the Methodist societies. These ignorant and foolish men of the "association," so called, ought to have known that the language used by Mr. Pawson, above quoted,

did not allude to any supposed tyranny of the Conference, the doleful ditty of every contemptible pamphlet and speech with which those disaffected men have treated the public. Mr. Pawson is referring to circumstances which transpired in the Conference of 1795, and of which those scribblers in behalf of the association appear as ignorant as the untutored hottentot hunting in his native glens. The all-absorbing topic of that day, and which so much engaged the attention of the people, was an apprehended departure from the established church, manifested by the introduction of the Lord's supper into our chapels—a measure which was hailed with joy by some, and as firmly resisted by others. The matters in dispute were not between the Conference and the people, as the *ignoramuses* of the “association” foolishly assert, but between the people and several of the trustees, who made their appeal to the Conference. It is, therefore, a most bare-faced perversion of truth to say, that the language of Mr. Pawson is directed against the tyranny of the Conference, of which he was one of the oldest and most influential members. If these wild and destructive men of the *illegal* “association” will recklessly tear the venerable Pawson out of his grave—place him with a Fergie in the jury-box, and give to his words a meaning which the good man never intended, in order to answer their sinister and interested designs, nothing is too base—nothing too dishonourable for them to attempt. Conduct of the character which they have been following is, however, in perfect keeping with the principles which the “association” proposes to follow, and which they have embodied in the anti-methodistical and unscriptural address to the members of the Wesleyan societies—a principle which, notwithstanding their ravings against popery,* would, if carried out in practice, convey us with the velocity of a first-class railway carriage, into the superstitions and ignorance of the middle ages! Hear part of this affectionate address of the “association”:—“In the mean time, permit us to state, as the subject which, after all, is of paramount importance, our great anxiety lest any thing should, for a moment, lead any of our beloved brethren (!) or

* The editor of the *DARK Lantern*, referring to the language of one of the members of that rotten *fraternity*, the late leaders' meeting in Leeds-street, says—“he said in substance that the reign of Popery was reviving”! Pity, indeed, we were not favoured with a specimen of his infuriated ebullitions on that memorable occasion. If opportunity serves, we will supply this lack of service, provided our readers will peruse this precious document with their minds divested of the idea of a man in a *strait-jacket* before them, and all fear for the safety of his majesty's liege subjects being taken away, while this individual is at large. Such being expressive of that strange association of leaders (!) our readers will no longer be surprised that they should commit a Methodistical act of *felo de se*. Poor souls! *Requiescant in pace!*

“ sisters (!) to lose sight of those high spiritual interests, which alone can sanctify WHATEVER MEANS MAY BE EMPLOYED for the “ reformation of abuses ;” or, in other words, the end contemplated will fully justify whatever steps are taken towards its accomplishment.

We are not, therefore, surprised, that after having exhibited Mr. Pawson as a man at variance with the proceedings of the Conference of his day, the *leaders* of the “ association ” should lay hold upon the name and character of the Rev. Joshua Marsden, and, for the purpose of *coaxing* him over to their sinister purposes and objects, present him with a vote of thanks, forsooth, and for doing that of which he was perfectly innocent, and of this the “ association ” was aware. The vote was as follows :—“ That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Rev. P. Garrett, to the Rev. Joshua Marsden, and others (where are they ?) for a similar conduct at their respective quarterly meetings.” In what did this conduct consist ? Why, Dr. Warren first advocated and then suffered the following resolutions to be put and carried in the quarterly meeting of the first Manchester circuit :—“ 1. That this meeting requires nothing new in the constitution of Methodism (!) 2. That the preachers in Conference come to their decisions by the use of the ballot (!!) 3. That in future the Conference be open to the laity (!!!)” To assert almost in so many words that Messrs. Garrett and Marsden suffered such resolutions to be entertained in their respective quarterly meetings is a glaring falsehood. If the persons composing that unhallowed combination had been desirous of stating the truth, there was sufficient time from the celebrated quarterly meeting to the publication of the circular, to obtain correct information. This, however, was never sought. Mr. Garrett resided only within twelve miles of Manchester, and two days would have conveyed a letter to Sheerness, so that by a little caution of this nature, the “ association ” might have been preserved from the guilt of publishing another falsehood to the many with which, we are well aware, they have already disgraced the church.

At conduct so base, and unwarrantable, Mr. Marsden felt, as every man of honour would feel under such an imputation, which reflected so powerfully and injuriously upon his personal and ministerial character ; and, therefore, published the following letter, which, because it will answer our purpose of exposing “ the spirit of the faction,” which is now agitating certain parts of the Wesleyan connexion, we present it in full to our readers :—

TO THE EDITOR.

Sheerness, 15th Dec. 1834.

SIR—Sometime since I learned from the public papers, that a number of persons;

calling themselves "The Wesleyan Methodist Association," did me the unasked and unmerited honour of a vote of thanks for what never existed, and what never can exist, with my present views and feelings.

Sir, I have not the ambition, like the incendiary who burned the temple of Ephesus, to be gibbeted to infamy. I detest schism from my very soul, and the unauthorised insertion of my name in a certain paper, was a most *dishonourable trick*, without my knowledge, privity or consent. All I said at that quarterly meeting was, (when at the end of it, two or three individuals mooted the subject) that if the subject was left to lie over till the spring quarter, I would carry any representation made by a lawful majority to the district meeting, and there the matter rested.

Now, sir, have I not cause to reject the vote of thanks, assumed upon that *bold, daring, and unauthorized* use of my name?—I deserve a vote of thanks for promoting the demolition of one of the finest fabrics in the world!—I, who have laboured *fourteen* years in foreign parts to help to rear it up, and *twenty-one* years at home to promote it!—I, who have been a Wesleyan Methodist from eighteen years of age—not a *new fangled*, but a true Methodist! Sir, I abhor the thought; and I can call the searcher of hearts to witness, that it has been as far from my thoughts "as from the centre to the utmost pole."

But I have no fear as to the ultimate result. Methodism has weathered many a storm, and it will weather this also. At any rate, should things come to the worst, and we have to realize that frightful conflict for which the enemies of our Zion seem to be preparing—I, for one, will nail my colours to the mast, and perish in the last wreck of Methodism, rather than strike to those who are endeavouring to sink the gallant vessel.

You may be told, sir, that I write this to clear myself with my brethren; I have nothing to hope or fear from that quarter; I am, sir, neither tory nor radical; but I love order. Besides, I owe my all to Methodism—I mean, my dearest hopes, my truest comforts, and my purest light. By its ministers, I was tutored, watched, and brought to salvation—I have known some of its mighty pillars—the giants of other days—I have sat with delight under Mather, Taylor, Thompson, Hopper—I have wept at the appeals of Benson, Coke, Bradburn, and many others—I have spent my vigour in its missionary service—have grown old and grey in its ranks, and shall I leave Methodism? Rather let my right hand forget its cunning—

"Be my tongue mute, my fancy paint no more,
And dead to joy, my heart forget to beat."

I love its doctrines, its discipline, its ordinances, its ministry, and its ministers; and there are few earthly considerations but I would rather relinquish than my name in its society, and my ministry in its pulpits.

You will observe, sir, that I have said nothing about the theological institution, that has been ably defended by others. Nothing about the unprincipled and undeserved abuse poured so plentifully upon the heads of many excellent ministers of Christ. That speaks for itself, and is proof (if any were needed) that truth and charity have been banished from the party who wish to govern the helm of Methodism. Nothing respecting the wide, sweeping reform in perspective—a reform utterly destructive of every vestige of the Wesleyan polity; and by whom? By men who, to gain their ends, would cripple our missions—send our worn-out preachers a-begging—bring ruin upon our trustees and chapels—desolate our schools, and deprive poor circuits of the means of having the gospel preached. But where is the end of this chain of mischief? And what do its authors contemplate? "My soul come not thou into their secret, mine honour unto their assembly be not thou united."

And these things are to be brought about, sir, by slander, defamation, duplicity, backbiting, tale-bearing, evil-surmising, letter-stealing, name-forging, and dishonourable espionage. "By their fruits ye shall know them." I will conclude with an anecdote, the truth of which came under my own knowledge, and the application of it in reference to the Wesleyan Methodism, I shall apply to my own case.

When, twenty-two years ago, I was detained a prisoner of war, in New York, a friend of mine—a worthy Englishman—who had been in that city some years, and in good business, wished to get naturalized. He applied to the mayor, De Witt Clinton, who read to him the form, as preliminary to the oath of naturalization—the pre-

amble of which is to the following effect :—" You swear to renounce allegiance to all foreign princes, potentates, and powers ; but especially to his majesty, king George the third, his heirs and successors, for ever : " " Stop ! stop ! " said the indignant old Briton—" I will rot in jail first."—I am, sir, yours respectfully,

JOS. MARSDEN.*

Mr. Garrett published a similar address, and in his own style, in which he declares, that the prominence which this " most anti-methodistical " association gave to him " was as grateful to his feelings as a bottle of vitriol poured upon his head, and worse, by ten thousand times, than being placed for half a year in the most exalted pillory that could be erected.†

MR. POOLEY AND THE LANTERN.

An account of the expulsion of this gentleman, has been given to the public, furnished by the sufferer himself. According to his own account, he is a very eminent Methodistical lawyer, and abundantly more than a match for all his opponents ; but, although he charges them with breaking the rules, he says nothing of bringing them to justice, being perhaps aware, that his great skill in law, though splendid in the *Lantern*, might possibly fail him before one of the constituted tribunals of Methodism.

Finding, from the experience of his brethren, that nothing was to be gained by quibbling and evasion, he thought it best to tell the truth, and so admitted, on his trial, that he was a member of the " association ; " and this avowal, which, under all the circumstances of the case, scarcely amounted to an act of common honesty, he considers to be such a piece of heroism in virtue, as entitles him to the appellation of Martin Luther the Second !

His admirer, Mr. Geo. Pennell, thinks that wisdom and piety might have devised some way of settling these disputes, without having recourse to expulsion. We must leave the matter to his " piety," and Mr. Pooley's " wisdom," as we have no hope of finding another pair equal to themselves. The conduct of the superintendent preacher, Mr. Pooley declares to be

* A " Thomas Taylor, trustee and local preacher in the Manchester first circuit," has stepped forward to inform us that the " association " only sent a vote of thanks to Mr. Marsden for his able and impartial conduct in the chair of the Sheerness quarterly meeting ; and would insinuate that this expression of opinion only refers to the fact of impartiality, abstractedly considered. This is pitiful sophistry ! If words have any meaning at all, the idea intended to be conveyed by the " association " is this—(and which is actually embraced wherever the circular of that combination has arrived) :—That Messrs. Marsden and Garrett followed the same able and impartial conduct of Dr. Warren, who was so wonderfully *impartial* as to trample upon the laws and usages of Methodism, for the sake of pleasing a party with whom he wished to *curry* favour, and whose avowed objects are to revolutionize and destroy the Methodist constitution. Mr. Marsden's charges against the " association " are fully corroborated by this document. This " Thomas Taylor " may be a very *good* man ; he is certainly a very *weak* man ; and most assuredly the words which the association's *Lantern* wildly applied to " good farmer Dawson," are strictly applicable to him—" Be not again tempted to tread the thorny paths of controversy. In it lieth not thy forte."—Ed.

† See " Work for Dr. Warren," second edition, p. 23.

"jesuitical and dishonest," and adds, that a member of his class, to wit, Mr. C. Fergie, is ready to prove upon oath, that his Rev. pastor has told a lie, and yet Mr. Pooley thinks, this self same superintendent, as if not bad enough already, should have done an act of hypocrisy by giving him a ticket, as he was wishful, notwithstanding, to keep up the hollow profession of a religious brotherhood.

When matters are come to this pass among professedly religious people the necessity of a separation must be obvious to all mankind; but yet, it must not be made by the preachers expelling the leaders, as that, it seems, is quite illegal. Perhaps we shall be told in the next number how far it is "legal" for the leaders to expel the preacher, as was done at Leeds-street, because if that mode of settling matters will please the faction better it may, perhaps, be found mutually agreeable; as we can assure Mr. Pooley, that, by certain parties in the society, and some of these, too, persons whom he professes to respect, expulsion, or any thing else which would end in a separation from himself and his brethren, instead of being complained of as an injury, would be hailed as a great deliverance.*

Miscellanea.

CASTLE DONNINGTON & THE SO CALLED METHODIST ASSOCIATION.

Prosecuting his wild and reckless schemes of agitation and discord, the infatuated Dr. Warren forwarded one of his inflammatory circulars to the above town, addressed to a highly respectable and influential gentleman, to whom the Doctor was a perfect stranger, except by character. The adulatory powers of the learned divine, however, were in this instance, as in many others, employed to no purpose. The firm and determined spirit which has been manifested by the true friends of Methodism in every part of the connexion has had the effect of a "chilling frost" on the blooming expectations of the disaffected—ultimately revolutionizing the Methodist body. A few insignificant, and altogether uninfluential, members of society may be found in every circuit, ready for any enterprise in which they have nothing to lose; men of no responsibility, and—from the fruits they present,

* The case of Henry Pooley is pitiable. We regret that he should find it necessary to drag in to his aid such supporters! When an individual comes forward to give evidence intended to impugn the veracity of his minister and pastor (a very painful task, no doubt!) we are in duty bound to examine how much the evidence is worth. We therefore ask Mr. Pooley, "Is it he, who feels so little repugnance in using other and more common oaths than the one he offers to take in the case of the Rev. S. Jackson? Is it he, whose glorying consists in maliciously defaming the character of the preachers, and speaking all manner of evil against them with greediness? Is it the same man whose strenuous efforts are used in poisoning the mind, and consequently hardening the hearts, of his partners in folly, not only against Methodism, but against religion itself? Is it the same convivial and accomplished person who, to crown all his energies, gives vent to his vocal powers in songs of triumph, to receive the adulations of his bacchanalian associates? Ask the late *faithful* and *confidential* (!) servant of a respectable bootmaker in Islington, Liverpool! Ask the spirit-vaults of Sharp's, Richmond Row, and the visitors of Yates' public-house, Circus-street: Ask the late hours of a Saturday night, or the more sacred hours of a Sabbath morn.. Ask—but we forbear, and wish Mr. Pooley all the joy he can realize from such friends and counsellors.—ED.

it is to be feared—men of no piety. In the feeble and delusive glimmer of the *DARK Lantern*, these persons, like *Jack-in-the-box*, immediately spring up into consequence and importance; and then, perfectly deceived by the deceptive character of his own light, the editor of the *Lantern* trumpets them forth as kings in our Israel—men of influence and worth. If, however, the signs of the time tell any tale at all, it is this: that these men, who rose like the *rocket*, are now descending like the *stick*, into their primitive insignificance—from Smith, the cotton-spinner, of Stockport, to Charles Fergie, the friend and counsellor of Mr. H. Pooley, jun. We are happy to give the following correspondence for the amusement and edification of our readers:—

DOCTOR WARREN TO MR. J. S. OF CASTLE DONNINGTON.

DEAR SIR—Though unknown personally to you, yet from my knowledge of your name and patriotic character I have taken the liberty of sending you the accompanying sheet. I am, dear sir, yours most respectfully,
SAML. WARREN.
Manchester, 8th. Nov. 1834.

MR. J. S. TO DR. WARREN.

DEAR SIR—I am in receipt of yours of the 8th inst., with printed resolutions and propositions, made and passed at your quarterly meeting. Although you are personally unknown to me, I have always been accustomed to associate with the name of Samuel Warren, all that is amiable, kind, and characteristic of a minister of Jesus Christ. But on reading a pamphlet of yours, relative to the Theological Institution, purporting to be the substance of a speech delivered before the Conference, I am sorry to say that I thought it greatly wanting in that Christian courtesy I expected to have seen from Dr. Warren, and containing sentiments calculated to excite so much discord in the Methodist connexion. Perusing your printed circular of to-day, contemplating such mighty changes in the constitution of Methodism, issued at a time when there is such a thirst for change in all the institutions of the country, and so much opposition to all kinds of government, both in church and state, I must acknowledge I was perfectly astonished. My dear sir, whatever may be your designs, your proceedings will undoubtedly cause great discord and disunion in the connexion, and a division must take place. I am not surprised that you should be so deeply impressed with the awful risk of indecision, as expressed in your circular. Awful indeed must be the crisis to you and the whole world. Methodism has been attacked many times, but has she appeared less brilliant in her career of usefulness? No! it has been the means of removing some rubbish from her pale, and although many valuable members have been swept away with it, generally speaking, they have returned to the old ship again; and I need not tell you of the prosperity of the cause in those places where these divisions have occurred. Suppose you succeed in causing a division (of which there appears little doubt) in all probability you may have a great many followers; you may be placed at the head. What then? Do you think such subjects will be governed by good and wholesome laws? No: they will be subjects that will refuse to acknowledge the powers that be. Could you have conceived that a man so base could be found, who would at this crisis of Missionary affairs, when every energy ought to be exerted in that glorious cause, to meet the demand for Missionary labour, go and prevent the holding a Missionary meeting, and thereby cripple her energies by stopping her supplies.* Under a plea which you have supplied, that the Conference had established a theological institution designed to render her ministers more efficient, and her Missionaries better qualified for their important work. No. I cannot conceive for a moment that Dr. Warren ever intended such use to be made of his pamphlet. With regard to the opposition made to the theological institution by the people of Manchester, it comes with a very bad grace from them. I conceive their conversion to its

* Mr. S. was not aware that Dr. Warren actually applauded the man who performed this base and dishonourable part at the Bridgewater-street Missionary Meeting, Manchester.—See "Work for Doctor Warren," Second Edition, p. 18.

faith to be the easiest thing imaginable. Only place me on the stationing Committee two years with full powers, and I would engage to have their liberal support instead of their violent opposition. I would not appoint them Dr. Warren and such men as they have been favoured with!—Relative to the resolutions passed at your meeting, I would observe that it would have been more consistent with the high and honourable character sustained by Dr. Warren, to have quietly left the Methodist connexion, and have joined himself with that section of the Methodist family whose views of church government coincide with his own, instead of agitating the whole body. I must conclude by hoping soon to hear that Dr. Warren has come to his right mind again—that he has returned to his Father's house—a house where he has been blessed and made a blessing; and although there may be a few cobwebs, and a little dust collected upon her pillars these may be swept away, that the nations of the earth may see her glory and beauty.

Yours most sincerely,

J. S.

Castle Donnington, 11th Nov. 1834.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Since the appearance of the first *Illuminator*, our publisher and his agents have been threatened with law proceedings and what not, by those who "love darkness rather than light." Mr. Beynon, who thinks his character likely to suffer by illumination, has sent us a letter threatening what he will do, in case any portion of that unwelcome thing called *light* should be thrown upon him. The gentlemen of the "association" may well clamour for the vote by ballot, for above all things they cannot bear being seen. "If one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death."—In the midst of all these alarms and threats, the circuit-stewards in the Liverpool North Circuit have received the sum of £18 8s. 4d. from their *quondam* friends of Leeds-street, for which they before applied repeatedly, but in vain. A few weeks ago, the question about paying a part of this money—then more than due—was put to the seceding leaders' meeting, and rejected by a large majority. Since then the *Illuminator* has emitted a *single* flash, and they have "unanimously resolved" to pay the whole forthwith. We happen to know, that although the account sent to the stewards is not quite satisfactory, yet these gentlemen duly appreciate our services as illuminators! The documents which accompany this remittance may be of some importance. The Music-Hall meeting, by a formal vote, has directed part of the society's income for the past quarter to be paid over to the circuit stewards, and part to be kept back. The authority which thus disposes of the revenues, without consulting any body but itself, and according to its mere will and pleasure, is, of course, sovereign and supreme, and can only belong to a separate and independent community. The documents are duly signed and authenticated, and establish the independence of the new community, beyond all contradiction. Strange that these sons of freedom did not long time since, as they have done at last, by a short-lived act of violence, throw off the incubus of a Conference superintendency, and assert their rights as free-born Britons. This would have saved half an age of strife and contention—all the unpleasantness connected with the recent expulsions, and the ridiculous hub-bub which has arisen out of them.

Communications of a most encouraging character, in reference to the feelings in favour of the present constitution and discipline of Methodism, have been received since our last went to press, from the following circuits:—Haverford West, Guisborough, Alnwick, Howden, Leeds, Loughborough, Huddersfield, North Shields, Bolton, Dover, London north, Lynn, Halifax, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Bridlington, Manchester, Newark-upon-Trent, Portsmouth, Tavistock, Market Raisen.

From *A Lover of Methodism*, *Philalethes*, *Sigma*, *Mentor*, *A. B.*, *Delta*, *W. B.*, *W. P.*, and *Faithful*, we have received important communications, and hope to be favored with their assistance as often as their other engagements will permit.

Israel is under consideration. If he will leave his address at our publisher's, we should have pleasure in corresponding with him.

An Admirer of "*The Case without a Parallel*;" Review of *John Beynon's Case*; *Logic in a Lantern*—or, *John Gordon at the Music Hall, Leeds*, will appear in our next.

THE ILLUMINATOR:

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

No. 3. **LIVERPOOL, FEB. 4, 1835.** **Price 1¹/₂d.**

AN EARNEST APPEAL

*To the Members of the Wesleyan Methodist Societies in the Town
of Liverpool, on the Anarchy introduced by the Members of
the so called "Grand Central Association."*

(Concluded from our last.)

APPEALS are made to you—loud and impassioned—that the preachers are corrupt, tyrannical, and constantly encroaching on your liberties. A distinction is attempted to be set up between the interests of the people and the preachers, and it is to be apprehended that the stratagem to divide you into two distinct classes has been but too successful. We have the strange anomaly of preachers' men and people's men!

As the connexion of the two parties is altogether voluntary, we ask you, whether the interests of the preachers can be separable from yours? It is obviously for their advantage to have the united, affectionate, and Christian support of all the church with whom they may be associated. It would be a proof of absolute folly, for the preachers intentionally to isolate their interests. As we believe that God and religion make the happiness and good of ministers and people identical, so we cannot imagine that the preachers are so destitute of common prudence, to say nothing of higher principle, as to frame their proceedings with a view to grind and oppress those to whom they are sent to minister the word of life.

We put it to you, our brethren in Christ, whether you have been deprived of any of your privileges and rights? You know that you have possessed whatever Methodism possesses. Its gates have been thrown widely open to you, and you have been encouraged to luxuriate freely, and without let or hindrance, in its richest spiritual pastures. It found many of you spiritually poor, but it has made you rich—it found you in darkness and the shadow of death,

and it has given you light ; and, as piety is power, and God bestows with regeneration gifts for usefulness, greater facilities for the employment of whatever gifts may have been bestowed on you, have been afforded you in this connexion, than would have been granted in any other part of the church. The whole economy of Methodism rests on the double principle of ministering the privileges of the Christian religion, truly and fully to all its disciples ; and also to furnish employment, under suitable discipline, for all the sanctified gifts and talents which it may please the great head of the church to confer. Methodism has nothing more than this to give, and, we boldly affirm, that in the general administration of the system, it is true to these principles ; and, instead of the rights and privileges of the people being trampled upon, their highest good has ever been sought, and their honour and usefulness encouraged and promoted.

But you are the best judges of this, and you have an infallible test of the spirit of Methodism, for it is in reality and fact *that which it is to you*. It is easy for designing men to caricature the system, and represent it as cruel and oppressive. Have *you* found it a horrible system of tyranny ?—a dark intrigue to entrap you ?—a jesuitical web dextrously woven and thrown in your course to entangle your freedom of action ?—a cunning contrivance to cut down your mental stature, rob you of your rights even as members of civil society, and then trample on your fallen state for its own selfish purposes ? If you have proved it to be so, at once renounce it, and beckon all the world to point to it the finger of scorn, and aid in its total and eternal overthrow !

No. The conflicts which take place in our connexion, never lie between the body of the people and their preachers. The present faction, as in times past, artfully call themselves *the people* ! and represent the collision as existing between them (*the people*) and the Conference ! In what sense, we should like to know, is a leaders' meeting, or any other meeting, the church ? Or, in what respect can a number of disaffected officers, struggling for ascendancy, grasping at an increase of power, and attempting to establish their own government over the societies, be considered the people ? We grant that they succeed in enlisting too many in their cause, and chiefly by the employment of the artful sophism, that they are the natural friends of the people, whilst their ministers are their oppressors and enemies ! No ! Let our good friends open their eyes to the fact, that these men are not even *of the people* any more than their preachers ; for they are officers, though of another class ; and, if they succeed in gaining their point, altering the constitution, and rendering themselves triumphant, what will they have to give the people which they do not already enjoy ? They will be prepared to present to them, in the place of a pastoral government, surrounded at every point by checks and guards to prevent the

arbitrary and precipitate exercise of discipline, some kind of untried oligarchy, composed of themselves with an enslaved preacher as the attorney of their laws and the trumpet and mouth-piece of their lordly pleasure. We do not say that this is the intention of *all* the persons united in the Association, but it is the design of the leaders, if they intend any thing beyond agitation, and we suppose they would not agitate for its own sake.

Then, let not our real people be deceived : the dispute lies between *two classes of officers* in the connexion. The object of the discontented faction is not to lay open our societies and change them into independent churches, but to give their own official power some new form so as to become the real government of Methodism. If then the people are called upon for an expression of opinion or the exercise of choice, it is—whether they choose to place themselves under the government of the “Grand Central Association,” with perhaps some new modifications ; or, remain under that mixed and well-balanced administration which they now enjoy ;—a form of government which always secures the highest degree both of purity and substantial freedom. For our own part, we have no desire to see the power of the preachers indivisible and irresponsible ; and we believe the clamour against them on that subject to be a slander on their character. Absolute power cannot be safely trusted in any hands, laic or clerical, and we are persuaded that our present constitution is admirably adapted to preserve purity and liberty ; and if our official functionaries were wise, they would universally support it, and our confidence is—that the people, who are not in the same circumstances of temptation, will continue to do so.

We conclude this somewhat lengthy appeal, by earnestly entreating the members of society to watch against a disputatious spirit—little and unworthy jealousies—being borne away in this hour of temptation by sympathy of feeling with the divisive purposes of the Association faction, and in renewed prayer and confidence, to devote themselves to the spiritual interests of the church to which they belong. After having torn and rent the societies, injured the peace of many, and ruined others, this storm will blow over. We have no fear for Methodism—our fear is for *you*, and the infatuated men who have lent themselves to do mischief. But even amongst them, we “make a difference.” We have a thorough conviction, that the real authors of this division are limited to a very small number—perhaps some half-dozen—really factious persons, who have the cunning and address to infuse the leaven of discord amongst an unsuspecting and pious people. Towards the greater number of our brethren who have been inveigled into the Association, without knowing what they were doing, we feel unmingled pity and sorrow ; and most cordially and affectionately invite them back to their old associates and privileges. We know

they will be received with open arms, and the whole Wesleyan household will "make merry and be glad; for their *brethren* were dead, and are alive again; were lost, and are found!"

THE BRITISH CRITIC AND THE "ASSOCIATION."

We give the following extracts from a Review of Stephens' Life of Dr. Clarke, by the British Critic for Jan. 1835, as exhibiting the feeling with which our dissensions are regarded by churchmen—a feeling as creditable to them, as the cause producing it, is disgraceful to those whose rebellious and turbulent conduct has thus become the subject of remark and reprehension:—

"We have perused this volume with very mixed emotions. It has afforded us ample gratification as exhibiting the life and labours of a most extraordinary man, and it has filled us with melancholy, as it discloses the spirit of division which, if we may judge from the tenor of this work, is now threatening to rend the vitals of the whole Methodistic system. We have no sort of delight in contemplating these elements of discord. Confusion, divergency, and gradual decomposition, we verily believe to be the natural fate of separation. Dissent is born to this sort of trouble, as the sparks of fire fly upward. But foul befall that churchman who can look upon the fulfilment of this destiny with feelings of satisfaction. If his heart be right with God, or with man, instead of rejoicing, he would be prompted to exclaim with the sorrowing Priest of Anathoth—"O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears!" And, of all the families of dissent, there assuredly is no one better entitled to the sympathies of churchmen than the communion of John Wesley. It is a miserable thing to see *his* people running into the broad and beaten ways of anarchy and confusion; his own heart would bleed, if he were now living, to behold such sights. And churchmen though we be, our heart bleeds at the thought of what he would have to endure, if he could witness the spirit which seems now to be abroad among them who call themselves by his name.

"From this we may learn, that the *Spirit of the Age* is most magnanimously impartial: it can attack the Wesleyan hierarchy as fiercely as the national hierarchy. An intractable and self-willed minister sets at defiance the *canons* of the Conference; for this he is suspended from his functions. And, straightway, the *Spirit of the Age*, speaking by the mouth of its trusty and brazen-tongued herald, proclaims the *primate* an intolerable autocrat, and threatens the *Synod* with the wholesome superintendence of a body of lay-delegates. And this reform, it further declares, will be irresistibly enforced by the voice of the people; and there is confidently anticipated "*a crisis in Methodism*" which will "produce the most beneficial result in the entire body." This crisis, it would seem, is actually hastening to its completion; for we find that a meeting of stewards, leaders, trustees, and local preachers has recently been held at Manchester, with a view to the formation of a religious association for "*obtaining religious liberty*:" and further, that the people now begin to speak of three manner of persons—Whig Methodists, Tory Methodists, and Radical Methodists. The Warrenites are called Whigs; those who continue their allegiance to the Conference, Tories; and the Stephenites, Radicals. It is almost needless for us to say, that our cordial wishes are with the *Tory Methodists*; for this seems to be the only portion of the body which retains a single fragment of John Wesley's ecclesiastical mantle."

The phraseology cited above, and hacknied by political reformers, sufficiently shews that the agitation of political subjects among all classes, has produced a strong tendency to republicanism, a restless desire of political change, and an aversion to all restraint and rule; and this spirit is transfused into religious communities, and, like a mighty incubus, sits brooding over the churches, stifling all useful exertion, and fostering under its dark wing, discord, rebellion, and schism. But is there any parallel between the power devolving on our Conference, and the power of civil government; or, indeed, that of a national church supported by statutes and the civil arm? Is not the power exerted by the Conference *moral influence* chiefly—and that based upon the confidence inspired by the salutary effects which

have resulted from the beneficial working of the system to individuals and society in general? Is the union of our people with the body voluntary, or is it compulsory? If voluntary, is not that a sufficient check to an undue assumption of power? Is it likely, that means illegitimate in themselves, and offensive to just and scriptural principles, should be employed, when the people have the liberty at any time to withdraw themselves, and thereby to dissolve the connexion? If, then, there is no parallel between our constitution and the civil constitution, it is clear that the weapons employed to subvert the one, cannot prosper against the other—they may agitate, but cannot destroy. And ruefully are they mistaken who engage in such a contest, and greatly chagrined will they be at the futility of their assaults—

“ As surging waves against a solid rock,
Though all to shivers dashed, th’ assault renew—
Vain batt’ry, and in froth and bubbles end.”

Has, then, Methodism effected the good which is generally attributed to her? Or, has she been rearing up whited walls and painted sepulchures? If, through her instrumentality, immense numbers have been turned from darkness to light, and from the power of satan to God, who make the scriptures the guide of their conduct, and live in the habitual enjoyment of that meek and lowly religion, which so emphatically inculcates love and unity, and requires it as a test of discipleship: “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.” If this be the case, and we believe it is, with the great bulk of our people—to them we look for the preservation of the sanctity of the ministerial character and office, the support of our institutions, a decided avowal of their principles, and a prompt and vigorous effort to neutralize the attempts of misguided and deluded men to disturb the tranquillity of our societies. And, whilst our hopes rest on such a basis, we have nothing to fear; our foundation is firm; and, though the rains descend, and the floods rise, and the winds blow, and beat upon our house, it cannot fall—for it is founded upon a rock.”

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

SIR—No society was ever formed by the servants of God, under the influences of the Spirit of Wisdom, without suffering from the open and secret attacks of the enemies of order and discipline. These assiduously introduce themselves to the notice; friendship, and fellowship of men who, with a real desire of advancing the good of others, as well as of receiving good themselves, joyfully hail every sign, no matter how small and indistinct, which may encourage them to hope that a work of grace has been commenced in the heart; at once do they offer the right hand of fellowship, and enter into the closest intimacy with many who, having first deceived themselves, find it no difficult matter to deceive almost every one with whom they are connected. In this way, tares of the most rancorous and destructive kind have been sown amongst the wheat; and notwithstanding the laborious efforts of those who have the care of the gospel field, to preserve the good seed from being stunted in its growth, or “choked” by the fatal and withering influence of the offensive or the bad—they see with pain that it is utterly impossible to produce any beneficial effect to the whole, but by effecting a separation of the one from the other. This is equally wise and judicious. Notwithstanding the laborious and diligent efforts of the careful and intelligent farmer to cultivate his land, and throw in the choicest seed, all his efforts will not prevent the noxious weed from springing up with the good grain, equally healthy and beautiful in its first appearance, and to the eye of a casual observer, of similar form and *genus*. But not so in reality: the unwelcome intruder finding itself in a rich and fertile soil, pushes its growth

to such unbounded extremes that the true grain, valuable as indeed it is, can no longer flourish to perfection, or even exist, unless relieved from the company of its troublesome and enervating neighbour.

Those who have been expelled, complain that they are cast out of the church and thrown back upon the world, a prey to the first wicked spirit that may pass by and find them. If this event should occur, it will be the result of their own folly and wickedness. There are, however, other communions in which—if they repent and forsake their present plans of agitation and discord—they may receive that benefit and comfort which, as they have proved to themselves and to their late brethren, they never can enjoy amongst us—Christian communities in which the ascent from private membership to the higher offices in the church is so easy, and withal to them so delightful, that even the halt, the maimed, and the blind find not the slightest difficulty in making their way to any desirable place on which they may have set their heart. All they have to fear is lest some one more nimble and cunning than themselves should cut off some trifling angle in the road, and so gain the goal before them. No wonder that the minds of these men are kept in a continual state of ferment and excitement, that brotherly affection languishes amongst them, and that reverence towards their pastors is extinct. They give honour to that man alone who successfully exerts himself in the work of their promotion, whilst he who perceives that injury to the church must follow their induction to office, and therefore takes steps to prevent it—be he a minister or private member—is treated with contempt, if not followed with deadly hatred. Let those who can take a calm, steady, just view of the whole say, whether this state of things can or ought to exist as it is.

There are many amongst us, who, being prepossessed on the one side, or prejudiced against the other, would gladly sacrifice much of their own comfort, and even are willing to suppress their own opinions, if the “breaches might be healed without expelling so many of their friends.” We respect their feelings and would patiently listen to what they have to say, as far as Christian charity will bear them out. But will they murmur at the righteous judgment of God, and be ready to resign their seats in glory, because some of their friends whom they have tenderly loved in this world are cast out? We believe not. Well, then, if it be true that Almighty God will execute his own sentence upon every child of man at the last day, equally true it is, that he does now direct and govern the hearts and the actions of his faithful ministers; and if our worthy and esteemed friends would see more of the finger of God, and less of the mere act of man in the present transactions in our society, they would lay their hands upon their mouths and submissively acknowledge that the judge of all the earth doeth right.

DELTA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

DEAR SIR—I am heartily glad to receive the first number of the *Illuminator*. No man can read “The Case without a Parallel” without being illuminated. The dark side of a *Watchman's Lantern* may be a very convenient place for the men of Leeds-street vestry, but let the *Illuminator* bring his torch, and they must retire as bats and owls before the splendour of noon day. At the same time your readers will start at the sight of such exposures of wickedness with horror and amazement.

“Guilt is a monster of such frightful mien,
That, to be hated, needs but to be seen.”

Sir, you must excuse me, but “The Case without a Parallel” has so engrossed my attention that I can scarcely talk or write on any other subject. That article ought to be printed and circulated in a separate form; and wherever any sympathy for the Wesleyan Methodist members of Leeds-street exists, it ought to be nailed upon the people's doorposts, and like the Pharisees of old, ought “to stand at the corners of the streets,” in the form of a placard, “to be seen of men.”

“The Case without a Parallel” is no exaggerated title, but a sober truth. It is just what the title expresses: a disclosure of ineffable hypocrisy, guilty scheming, and opposition to the leading men in the connexion, as malignant as ever disgraced the human character—difficult would it be indeed to find any thing like it in modern times.

Sir, if you want to save your readers from this snare of the devil, so artfully laid to entangle them, Shout—shout! as with the blast of a trumpet—Read “The Case without a Parallel.” If the parties whose conduct is there exposed are ineapable of shame, let the world blush for them.

I have no fear for Methodism in this struggle. The enemy has overshot his mark; his designs are assuming too definite a form to do much harm: he has been drawn too much to the dark side of his lantern. That man must be blind indeed who cannot see that the end of this faction is that of revolutionizing Methodism, and trampling the preachers under their feet; and agitation is to be employed to bring about this worthy purpose. The means and the end are certainly worthy of each other!

The cause of God in this circuit is in a state of unprecedented prosperity; this is the testimony of some of the oldest and most influential members of the society. Methodism has been assailed by the great and the learned, and yet, in spite of them all, it has prospered far and wide; and can we suppose that after all it is destined to be uprooted by the "little creatures" of modern times? As soon may they try to tie up the wind in a bag, or extinguish the sun with a pair of sixpenny snuffers! Wesleyan Methodism will continue to prevail as it has done hitherto, when all the present race of its impugners and defenders are nailed up in their coffins.

You may put my name down as a subscriber for one hundred copies, which your publisher will forward regularly. I confess that by the aid of your *Illuminator*, I have discovered what I never expected to have seen, viz.—a set of faithless class-leaders, doing all they can to injure that cause they were professing to uphold. If I meet with a man who asks a question concerning the Liverpool faction, my reply is—Have you seen "The Case without a Parallel?" Read that, and it will give you more light on that subject than any thing I can say; besides, you can have it for three-halfpence, and where is the man who would go in darkness when he may be illuminated for so small a sum?

If "The Case without a Parallel" is not an untoward circumstance to the agitators, such an event never can come to them. The prominence given to them in that article will be "as grateful to their feelings as a bottle of vitriol poured upon their heads; and worse by ten thousand times than being placed for half-a-year in the most exalted pillory that could be erected."—Yours sincerely,

AN ADMIRER OF "THE CASE WITHOUT A PARALLEL."

January 17, 1835.

LOGIC IN A LANTERN; OR, JOHN GORDON IN THE MUSIC HALL, LEEDS.

SIR—At the late meeting in Leeds, D. Rowland delivered an eloquent speech, and Dr. Warren also appeared to great advantage; so that, as the French say of the Battle of Waterloo, the English were beaten hollow, according to the rules of war, although, somehow or other, the Duke of Wellington and his men, like Mr. Scarth and his friends, most rudely and clamorously gained the victory at last. But the pink and glory of that great meeting was the Rev. John Gordon, and, therefore, his speech is given at length. This youth left the Methodist itinerancy a few months ago, professedly on account of the decisions of the last Conference on the case of J. R. Stephens. His father, we believe, keeps a gin-shop* in the town of Dudley, where, it is said, he has acquired considerable property; and now this sprig of dissent, after being educated amidst all the enormities and abominations of such an establishment, and, of course, quite reconciled to the doings of the men who, according to John Wesley, "murder his majesty's subjects by thousands, and drive them to hell like sheep," feels his conscience to be shocked and wounded beyond measure, because, forsooth, the Conference has professed a friendly feeling towards the established church. Honest dissenters ought to be treated with respect; but the men who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel, entitle themselves to something very different.

Mr. Gordon assures us that his is no "clap-trap" speech, for it is thoroughly argumentative, and quite original. To prove that J. R. Stephens was expelled for "holding certain political opinions," he adduces a quotation from the minutes, which says, it was for attending "public meetings," delivering certain "speeches," and re

* Our correspondent is under a mistake. Mr. Gordon, sen. has recently retired from business, and has given up the trade of dram-selling to his son, John Gordon (a ci-devant Reverend!) notwithstanding the Association, for the purpose of eclat, and of continuing this practice of tricking the public, trumpet forth this "gin-seller" as the REVEREND John Gordon! and thus, by their own conduct, countenance "one of the first corruptions that ever entered the Christian church." Where is their consistency!—See "Lantern," p. 36,—ED.

fusing to give a pledge to abstain from such "proceedings" in future. He also proves that Methodist preachers have nothing to do with politics, by the example of John Wesley, who wrote on the American war, Catholic Emancipation, and other political questions. That every Methodist preacher ought to be at liberty to hold any opinions he chooses, without any interference from the Conference, he proves, from Mr. "Wesley's own words," who executed a 'deed, and caused it to be enrolled in Chancery, binding his preachers to the end of time, to believe and preach no other doctrines than those contained in his four volumes of sermons, and his notes on the New Testament. And that the Conference ought not to interfere with the affairs of societies, as the special district meeting did at Leeds; but leave all such matters to be settled by the "local authorities," he proves, by the conduct of St. Paul, in reference to the incestuous Corinthian: 1 Cor. 5. Because, 1, This was a clear case of foreign interference, inasmuch as the Apostle was "absent in body," viz. not at Corinth but at Philippi. 2, Instead of leaving this matter to the "local authorities," he takes it for granted that they had not done their duty, and, therefore, begins by reproving them. 3, He took upon himself to be both judge and jury in the case, saying, according to Doddridge, "I have both judged and passed sentence upon him." 4, He did this without a trial, on the evidence of common report: "it is reported commonly." 5, He left nothing to the "local authorities," but the secondary duty of a sheriff, which was to see that the sentence he had pronounced, was duly carried into execution. Ergo, the Conference ought not to interfere in any case whatever.

Further he says, if his principles were adopted, there would not be "any contention," as the "minority would submit to the majority;" and then leaves us to see how finely all this is exemplified in the case of Dr. Warren and himself. "Ministers of the gospel" ought to be "on an equality" with their people. This he proves by a text which assumes that there is a great difference in the circumstances of the parties. Ministers are likely to be tempted to arrogate lofty titles to themselves, and are therefore cautioned not to be "called Rabbi, Rabbi." The people, from their different situation, are in no such danger, and therefore have received no such caution. Finally, we find this gentleman in Leeds, helping the members of the Association, though he says he does not "hold the opinions" held by them; and opposing the Conference on account of its opinions about church and state, although on that very point he seems to have adopted their confession of faith: his words are—"I have a friendly disposition to the established church, which has been supported from the persuasion of its utility; and, under the present circumstances, the necessity of an established religion may be maintained, as securing to the nation such an amount of religious instruction as could not be provided by the voluntary principle;" so that he quarrels with the Conference because they are of the same mind with himself.

This, sir, is logic in a lantern; according to which it seems, by some unknown law in optics, every thing is reversed: for certainly, if this gentleman's arguments prove any thing, it is just the contrary of what he intended. This principle enables us to account for the result of the meeting. The party went to Leeds to recommend the Association to immediate and general adoption, and they did it in the way of which this is a specimen; the issue was, that Mr. Scarth's motion, declaring it to be a very needless and wicked thing, was carried by a large majority.

THE MUSIC HALL MEETING, LIVERPOOL.

As every person possessed of the least discernment must have foreseen, the Association is widening the breach already produced, and new subjects of complaint and vituperation increase in their imagination with every step of their progress. They began their career by declaring that they desired "nothing new in Methodism;" that their sole object was to redress grievances, and restore the system to its primitive simplicity. By this specious artifice, the leaders of the agitation succeeded in decoying great numbers of unsuspecting leaders and others to join their ranks. How does the matter now stand? Let the speeches delivered at the Music Hall furnish the reply.

After the report had been read, containing various details respecting the partial agitation of various circuits—the usual flourish of trumpets,

and heroic fight against the preachers—rich men, organs, liturgies, and the Brunswick “TEMPLE”—more serious matters came under the review of the patriotic and liberty-loving speakers. Amongst other subjects of debate, we observe, that the rules of the Methodist body which disallow such meetings as the Association—from the plain principle, that *regnum in regno* cannot exist very safely, and by which laws now, as at various former times, it has freed itself from turbulence and faction—became special objects of displeasure. We are not much surprised at this; it would indeed be expecting too much from the virtue of agitators, to find them on the side of laws and order. The passions and principles which inspire them to the noble task of *reform*, will keep them from feeling much veneration for the laws which arrest them in their career, and preserve all who choose to take shelter under their protection from the power of their associated tyranny. These laws—which will not allow “unthinking and unreasonable men” to agitate the societies—form themselves into associations—set up an independent government—and stretch over the regularly-constituted meetings the sceptre of their dominion—are thrown at their feet, and trampled upon as anti-Christian and anti-British. Not exactly so. It may be information to these gentlemen to be told, that neither Christianity nor English law will be found to tolerate principles analogous to theirs. If the primitive Christians had formed themselves into an association, we rather think—judging from various passages respecting individual disturbers—that they would have soon experienced the utmost punishment of the church—ejection from its communion; and we know that English law does not tolerate a government by private juntas of self-elected patriots.

If ever the well-principled and peaceful part of the Methodist community wished for proof of the absolute necessity and great utility of these laws, let the present proceedings furnish the demonstration. For ourselves, we hope, that whatever alterations of law may be deemed proper, now, or at any future period, it will be seen that *these laws* cannot be dispensed with; but ought rather to be amplified and strengthened. This will, of course, be considered illiberal and cruel. It can only be so considered by the breakers of the law; but if Methodism, in its institutions, is worth preserving, a rampart must be thrown up against the aggressions of these assailants, and especially the peace and piety of the people must, if possible, be rendered more secure against the pestiferous influence of men, who, to gratify some personal effront, or desire of pre-eminence, are not afraid to throw whole societies into disorder.

But whilst these particular rules were made the matter of low and vulgar vituperation, the whole constitution of Methodism was caricatured and held up to the scorn and contempt of the assembled people. Such is the natural progress of this fanaticism. These very parties set out in their career of infringement with professions of unmixed admiration of the constitution of Methodism, and avowed it as their duty, purpose, and intention, to bring the connexion back again to the Plan of Pacification—the magna charta of our liberties; from which, they affirmed, we had departed. But now, at the Music Hall meeting, after the lapse of only a few weeks, they have received additional light, and discover that the constitution itself is corrupt; and much of the speaking was addressed

to the assembly on the principle of the obligation of the Methodist body to break the rules of this most *admirable constitution*—for the purpose of its entire destruction, and establish another *regime* in its place. We are glad the matter has come to this; we now fully understand each other.

In the midst of much special pleading, garbled statements, and misrepresentations of the whole case, one of the speakers arrives at the conclusion—that the present government of Methodism ought not to exist; and that the object of the agitation is to prepare a government of “Methodism suited to these times.” One of the objects proposed is definite, the other not so; that which is definite and of easy comprehension is—that the Association, imitating the conduct of a certain party in the state, propose the *destruction* of the present constitution and government of the connexion. We never indeed entertained any doubt respecting this from the beginning; but certainly the Music Hall meeting has placed the fact beyond the shadow of a doubt. Their object is to annihilate the Conference, as it now exists, and consequently all those interests which stand associated with it. As we prefer open and manly warfare to bush-fighting, we thank the Association for these avowals; and all the friends of Wesleyan Methodism have to determine—whether the system they have hitherto cherished is still worth preserving. If they judge it to be so, they now know what they have to do; it is—to take their stand, firmly and decidedly, to resist, by all the means in their power, the *now* undisguised intentions of the *destructives*.

What is meant by “Methodism suited to these times” does not exactly appear from anythingsaid by the Rev. (!) speaker. It is probable the party are not fully prepared with any new system of church polity; and if we mistake not, they will find *destruction* a much easier task than the re-edification of the ruined fabric. But although the new constitution is not announced, it is perfectly easy to divine what its leading provision will be—the transfer of the power now exercised by our mixed constitution into the hands of the Association. We really feel some curiosity to know how they would manage to exercise their newly-acquired functions. The Conference, they say, ought not to have the government; and, on their principles, *no Conference*, however constituted, ought to possess this power. Their objections lie against any common government; for they assume, that the local meetings ought to be open to discussions on all subjects, their decisions final, and no appeal from them to any other tribunal allowed. Now, how the independence of circuits and societies can comport with a connexion, and the two clashing elements be brought into a state of practical concert, we are at a loss to know. From the settlement of the chapels, the itinerant plan, the dependence of the poor circuits, and the intertwining of the whole system into one compact whole, which has hitherto been its strength, we believe that a connexional independence is a chimera which can only exist in the brain of religious theorists, and is in practice absolutely impossible. Whether the independent form of church government is right or wrong, we do not affirm; but the independence of circuits, of local meetings, and of the official functionaries in a common government, must lead to the disruption of the connexion, and the ultimate establishment of the

Wesleyan societies into independent churches. We believe, the great body of our people are not prepared for this change at present; and, notwithstanding the zeal, industry, and plausibility of the Association, the "thousands of our Israel" will still prefer to remain as they are—designated by Mr. Wesley, "United Societies."

We conceive, the Association did not intend, when it first united, to place itself in the exact attitude it now holds. By expelling Mr. Jackson from his office of superintendent, at Leeds-street, and in their turn being expelled from the vestry of the chapel, on the authority of the trustees, a body of leaders and stewards adjourned to the Pilot-office, made themselves an independent meeting, and formed the nucleus of a new connexion in Liverpool. To what else can their proceedings lead? They are now separated from the Methodist societies—they have a leaders' meeting of their own—they announced from the platform at the Music Hall the names of their leaders, and the places of their meetings; and the next step must, of course, be, to organize themselves into a regular community. We warn our members who have been, or are, in danger of being beguiled—that the inevitable consequence of these proceedings must be to separate them from the connexion to which they have belonged.

The want of time and space forbids us to proceed; but we hope to be able to pay some further attention to the topics of the Music Hall speeches.

MR. J. WALTHER AT THE MUSIC HALL MEETING,

Held by the Association in the Music Hall, Liverpool.

MR. CHAIRMAN—I wish to know from you, as the president of the Association, whether you consider it as identified with the statements now made by Mr. Gordon? If so, what you advanced at the former meeting, as well as on the present occasion, that the "Association required nothing new in Methodism," cannot be correct; for if the gentleman's speech proves any thing, it is, that something new is wanted: consequently, one of you must be wrong.—[An indescribable scene of uproar and confusion now occurred; some crying out "Sit down—you shall not speak—go up to the platform"—and others, "Stop where you are, you will do very well." After the lapse of some minutes, order was restored.]

Before I make any observations on Mr. Gordon's speech, I cannot but compliment him on the ability he has displayed on the present occasion; yet, I must say, a more complete sophist I never heard. The gentleman would like to know from "any of those who have signed the declaration against the Association, what they mean by calling the Association unconstitutional, declaring that Methodism has no constitution." I am neither ashamed nor afraid publicly to avow in this meeting that I am one of those who signed the declaration against this combination, and which emanated from this circuit; and, in answer to the call of the gentleman, I now state my reasons for so doing. Whatever may be my particular views of the matter by which our society is at present agitated, I have ever been of opinion that this Association is contrary to the constitution of Methodism, as settled by the Plan of Pacification, in the years 1795 and 1797. We are told, indeed, that we have no constitution, and only laws. I should like to know what idea we can have of a constitution without law. Is there one in existence? Can Mr. Gordon form any notion of such a thing as an abstract constitution? I candidly confess I cannot. Whatever the gentleman may say to the contrary, we have a constitution, and one which is acknowledged by this Association. The committee have published the form of it to the world, a copy of which I hold in my hand, and, therefore, I shall read from it the law by which you are condemned. [Here I read the rule which refers to the calling of meetings.] I now ask whether either superintendents' quarterly, or leaders' meetings were ever consulted, as to the formation of this Association? You know they were not. How then, sir, in the face of this rule, can I regard your Association but as illegal and unconstitutional. What is your alleged complaint against the Conference, but that they have violated the Plan of Pacification; and you,

forsooth, in order to bring them to their senses, become guilty of the very crime with which you charge them. I yield to no man in this room in hearty recognition of that great Protestant principle, that it is the duty of every man to think for himself on religious subjects. Yet I do think, when I voluntarily connect myself with a religious body, I am bound to be amenable to the laws by which that body is governed, and if I have any grievance to complain of, to bring it before the regular meetings of the church; and should I fail in obtaining redress, to avail myself of my privilege, and leave it, and connect myself with some other more congenial with my principles. I am aware of what has been advanced as a plea for the formation of the Association, viz.—that the regular channels of communication to Conference are closed. This I positively deny; for I ask you, sir, when on your trial at the Mount Pleasant leaders' meeting, did not Mr. Marsden explicitly state, that if you would abandon the Association, all that had transpired should be as nothing, and that he would pledge himself that the regular way of access to Conference should be open; and in proof that he was sincere, he introduced the subject of a formal meeting, according to the provisions of the rule of 1797, to converse on the subject of dispute, at our last quarterly meeting, when it was agreed that a meeting of that kind should be held.

[Here I was interrupted by Mr. Gordon, as intimated in the *Lantern*, and not suffered to proceed.]

MR. BEYNON'S "CASE"—*Lantern*, p. 40.

We are credibly informed that when this gentleman was required to shew cause why sentence of expulsion from the society for manifest breach of rule should not be pronounced upon him, he drew out of his pocket a book in which his defence, as he calls it, was written, and from which he read the mass of absurdity which has since appeared in the "*Lantern*," and which, at the time, exercised the temper and patience of a numerous and respectable leaders' meeting, in the vestry of the Stanhope-street chapel, Liverpool, for something less than an hour. We give him ample credit for his caution, though we are at a loss to understand how a very eloquent man should be reduced to such a necessity. We cannot, however, say so much for his candour, when it is evident on his own showing, that his inane and feeble endeavour to justify himself from the charge of attempting to disturb the connexion, by his unthinking and unruly conduct, was not intended for his grieved and pitying brethren within the meeting; but for his unthinking and unruly "associates" without! The meeting, no doubt, seeing through the pretence, solemnly recorded their nearly unanimous opinion, that the course Mr. Beynon was pursuing, was any thing but respectful to themselves, and that the publication of this effusion, so far from promoting the cause of peace and truth, was only calculated to scatter "firebrands, arrows, and death." "We trust it will," say the members of the "grand central association," and proceed to indulge in a little indecent scoffing upon the subject. We recommend them to turn to their bibles, and for once read and inwardly digest what they will find in Proverbs, xxvi. 18, 19. "As a madman who casteth firebrands, arrows and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, am I not in sport?"

Were we disposed to banter upon such a subject, Mr. Beynon's "case" might furnish us with plenty of materials. But the subject is too serious; simple-hearted Methodists are getting deceived by men who are themselves deceived, and our duty as "Illuminators" is, not to sparkle but enlighten. It is true many will shut their eyes against the light. They "hate the light, neither will they come to the light, lest their deeds should be reprov'd" (margin discovered.) No wonder that when they stand before their peers, charged with divisive and seditious deeds, and revolutionizing designs, they, with mock dignity reply, "I shall neither admit nor deny—I insist upon proof!" when the very newspapers proclaim the glaring fact in documents of their own composition and insertion!

But we exempt Mr. Beynon from this charge, so disgraceful to many whom we might name. He did not descend to such detestable quibbling, but openly avowed his principles and entered upon their defence in the speech, or essay, or effusion, now lying before us in the "*Lantern*."

This defence we have designated a mass of absurdities, and, to particularize only a few instances, will fully bear us out in this. Would it were the only dish of froth that comes under our notice!

1. Let it be remembered that Mr. B. is an avowed member of the committee of the "grand central association," and that he declares to the world that no honest or upright man can remain in the Methodist connexion as at present constituted. The authorities of that connexion take him at his word, examine him, and find that he means what he says, and cut him off. He sets up a terrible cry at this, as injustice, tyranny, &c. Can absurdity go farther?

2. To show that the law of 1796 does not bear upon his case, he first carefully conceals the preamble of the law itself—viz. “What shall be done to prevent unthinking or unruly men from disturbing our people?” No doubt thinking it would serve his purpose better, not only to conceal this part of the law, but the confirmation of it in the ensuing year, in the following words:—“As the leaders’ meeting is the proper meeting for the society, and the quarterly meeting for the circuit, we think that other formal meetings in general would be contrary to the Methodist economy, and very prejudicial in their consequences.” Can we have a clearer illustration of the truth of this than by referring to the “formal meetings” which have been held in violation of this law, at the Bethel Rooms, the Pilot Office, the Music Hall, and elsewhere, during the last three months; at each of which Mr. Beynon has taken a prominent part in fostering the spirit of division and discord in the societies? Has he forgotten that he was warned at the Bethel Room meeting on the 10th November last, that he and his coadjutors were rendering themselves liable to expulsion for what they were doing, and that one of them (Mr. Pooley) publicly declared that this certainly was the fact? And yet in the very face of this rule of 1796, and the explanation of part of it in 1797, which, be it observed, carries with it all the force of a confirmation and re-enactment, he would fain attempt to persuade a score of leaders who were sitting upon his case, any of whom have as much common sense at least as himself, that a “part” of a law is the “whole” of that law, and that to “explain, confirm, and ratify” that part is to “repeat it!” No wonder that any member of the meeting thought his time might be better spent, than in controverting such palpable absurdity as this!

3. Amongst other grounds of justification of his conduct in co-operating with all his might in compassing the designs of this “grand association,” he whimsically enough lays great stress upon the two following:—That all this agitation and uproar is to obtain a “redress of grievances which are few in number;” and, 2—“To ask for the sacrifice,” on the part of the lovers of Methodism, as it is, and as it has ever been administered, “of no principle that is worth a rush.” And upon this odd reasoning, he grounds his illustration of the necessity of the Association, and of his identifying himself with its anarchical proceedings. Really this reminds one of

— “Ocean into tempest tost,
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.”

No wonder that he predetermined that if such convincing eloquence should fail to dazzle the plain honest Stanhope-street leaders, it should at any rate flicker and sputter in the “Watchman’s Lantern.” But what sort of a “justification” is all this? To us it appears far more like a hoax! Is Mr. B. naturally disposed to waggyery? Or, cannot he see how his own argument tells against himself? He is trying all he can “to shake the connexion from the centre to the circumference.” For what? To obtain a redress of a very “few” grievances, and a renunciation of no principle “worth a rush.” O wise legislator!—admirable reformer! Let Alfred and Luther sink into oblivion!

4. Another ground of justification of his conduct is, that he has, he says, a precedent in the proceedings of 1795. The people, it seems, wanted at that time to receive the Lord’s supper from the hands of their own preachers, and divine service (under certain restrictions) in church hours. The trustees of numerous chapels sent delegates to the Conference, to settle these affairs, and obtain a few concessions respecting discipline. The business was transacted in the most calm and brotherly manner, all reasonable requests were granted in this and the two following years, the constitution was settled, and the Conference was unanimously thanked by the committee of delegates “for their kind attention to their business,” and a solemn declaration made on their part “to support the Methodist cause upon the plan agreed on at this Conference.” It is true that Mr. Beynon says the Conference have broken this compact, but his proofs are upon a par with his justifications. But the Leeds case! Let Mr. B. sit down and answer, if he can, fairly and satisfactorily, Mr. Beecham’s essay, and Mr. Watson’s affectionate address. It will not do to call the former rigmarole, and the latter trash, as the Association do. No—let us hear something like an honest reply to their triumphant facts and arguments. Let Mr. B. account, if he can, for the uninterrupted and unexampled prosperity, peace, and increase of the Leeds society, ever since they got rid of a cabal of “unthinking and unruly men,” in 1827; and we will go as far as he likes into the Leeds case, a case which not only proves the strict and impartial attention to Methodist law, on the part of the Conference, but the factious, the unappeaseable, and the unchristian spirit and conduct of the men who vilify it.

But to return to this famous justification, on its ground of precedent in 1795 and 1797. We have seen what that is, now for the justification. “The delegates of 1835”—not the delegates of the trustees, as in 1795—not the delegates of the quarterly meetings, as in 1797;—no, “the delegates of—1835! will meet the Conference under different circumstances from those of their predecessors, and time only will discover whether more may not be obtained than is now the intention of asking.” Very well—let us leave it for time to show; and a very long period it may be before the Conference meet

these *soi-disant* delegates, or the Association explain what their ultimate intentions are, matters, they think, are hardly ripe enough for this. The mask must not be dropped too soon, lest simple sincere souls should become alarmed, and the ranks of the Association thin far faster than they filled. But what are we to think of a precedent which turns out to be no precedent at all!—owing to different circumstances on the one hand, and undefined and vague demands on the other? Mr. Beynon might just as well have quoted the Cato-street conspiracy as a ground of justification!

Absurd as this reasoning is—

“The greatest is behind;”

and he gives the leaders, or rather the “Lantern” a torrent of grand eloquence upon the right of petitioning, as furnishing the greatest and most glorious justification of his patriotic and Christian conduct, in endeavouring to pull down and destroy one of the fairest fabrics of Christendom, under the plea of repairing and beautifying it! Now, he knows that as a Methodist, be he a private member or an office-bearer, whether in his individual or public character, he has a right—a right clear, admitted and recognised over and over again by Conference, of stating his personal or social grievances with a certainty of their being listened to and considered with every fair attention. But because majorities in leaders’ and quarterly meetings cannot be persuaded that every thing which any body may complain of is really a grievance, and because they think it right to negative unreasonable propositions, or because the superintendent, as in duty bound, refuses to violate law and put to the vote some anti-methodistical whim or other, or if an individual be not disposed to complain of his own superintendent, strictly and firmly adhering to the discipline of the body, he learns that a preacher in some distant part of Yorkshire, or Cumberland, has dared the tumult of discord, and the roar of faction, and, in spite of the threats of the many-headed multitude, has successfully and firmly administered salutary ecclesiastical censure, Mr. Beynon joins an organized convention, which publicly and privately mocks at and spurns the authority of Conference, and thereby utterly disqualifies every individual connected with it from petitioning the Conference at all; for all petitions coming from such a quarter, the Conference is bound, according to the principle of its recognised laws, positively to reject. This conduct, however, Mr. Beynon adopts in order to preserve his right of petitioning. He renounces that right in order to preserve it! Let him not forget the fable of the dog and the shadow.

We dismiss all the rest of this eloquent declamation—viz. Standing up for and defending the rights of the people—the tyranny of the preachers—patriotism—the British constitution a discerning public—Love (!) for Methodism—and much more of this sort. We are aware that unsuspecting honest people amongst us are, and may be, misled for a time, by this seeming attachment to the body; but those who are better informed know that it only means—lust for power and distinction, without judgment to use them for good purposes—desire of the influence of others, without possessing either their talents or virtues—and a constant disposition to ascribe unworthy motives to others whose sacrifices of time, ease and substance, they cannot comprehend the meaning of. Well did the meeting recommend Mr. Beynon not to expose himself in a more public manner to the pity of the judicious. To cease from fomenting discord and strife; and, in our opinion, he would have done well to have taken their advice, for we are free to acknowledge there are some good points about him after all. We believe his conduct springs more from mistake than malice; we know of no stain that he has brought upon Methodism, before this junction with the wicked Association, and we heartily wish him a safe descent from the unenviable eminence he has attained, down to

“THE LOW PATHS OF HUMBLE LOVE.”

Miscellanea.

BOLTON AND THE SO CALLED “METHODIST ASSOCIATION.”

Our correspondent informs us, that the prospects of the Grand (!) Central Association in this town are not unlike those of a man attempting to cross a trackless desert in a dark tempestuous night; he having, forsooth, no prospect at all but bewilderment and ruin! and the “association” *Lantern* only serves to make their darkness more visible. The prospects of constitutional Methodism there were never of a more cheering and encouraging kind than at present. This news we were fully prepared to receive from the noble declaration which emanated so spontaneously from the good people of

this town, and which received such a mighty phalanx of signatures in so small a period of time. Their works praise them in the gate! After this fine display of sound Methodistical feeling, we wonder, with the *Boltoners*, at the presumption which induced Dr. Warren and his *tail*, to inflict a visit upon them. There is no accounting for the eagerness with which some men rush upon their own discomfiture and disgrace!

LEEDS WEST CIRCUIT AND THE "ASSOCIATION."

"Several copies of two documents, purporting to have emanated from the quarterly meeting of the Manchester First Circuit, and from a meeting of trustees, local preachers, leaders, and stewards, held in Manchester on the 7th November last, having been forwarded to various officers of the Wesleyan Methodist society in Leeds West circuit,—We feel ourselves called upon, by the manifest evil tendency of the said documents, to record our most unqualified disapproval of them.

"1st. Because we regard the formation of what is called the "Grand Central Association" as wholly uncalled for by any existing circumstances of the Wesleyan Methodist connexion, and as being a flagrant violation of the "Minutes" of 1797.

"2nd. Because the insinuations contained in these documents against the integrity and fidelity of the excellent body of Christian ministers with whom we have the privilege to stand connected, we believe to be unfounded and calumnious; and, notwithstanding the aspersions which have, of late, been so lavishly cast upon them, we still regard them with unabated affection and confidence.

"3rd. Because we view with the utmost abhorrence and indignation, the proposal contained in these documents, to "stop the supplies" which we have usually contributed to the several funds of the connexion: especially as in this proposition the monstrous principle is involved, that on the occurrence of any difference of opinion in our large connexion, as to the merits of any new claim on the voluntary generosity of our people, the current claims of all our existing and highly approved institutions are to be simultaneously rejected; a proposal so absurd, that we are amazed at the apparent gravity with which it is urged.

"4th. Because while we exercise our right of private judgment as to any decisions of the Conference, yet, as officers of the Wesleyan Methodist society, we do not deem it either just or expedient to engage in any factious opposition to that body: we ourselves owe much to Methodism as it is at present constituted, and we see it is effecting, on a grand scale, all the ends for which we exist as a religious community. We have, therefore, no desire to "meddle with them that are given to change;" but, on the contrary, it is our fixed purpose to maintain amongst ourselves "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

"The above declaration was adopted by the meeting on the motion of Mr. James Musgrave, seconded by Mr. Christopher Dove, and supported by Mr. Henry Spink. The stewards were directed to sign it on behalf of the meeting, and to publish it forthwith.—Signed on behalf of the meeting,

"CHRISTOPHER DOVE, } Society Stewards.
"JOHN RAYNAR, }

"Vestry of Albion-street, chapel, December 12, 1834."

Our correspondent informs us that not one member of the society in this

circuit has proved unfaithful, and joined the Association ! The recent meeting held in the Music Hall, Leeds, did not effect the object which these agitators contemplated. A hallowing influence resting on the societies preserved them from the evil with which they were threatened. Their number and spirituality are increasing, the finances of the circuits are in a state of unparalleled prosperity—and peace and harmony, together with a firm attachment to constitutional Methodism, gloriously prevail. Thus has Almighty God turned the counsels of these Ahithophels into foolishness !

Notices to Correspondents.

When Mr. C. Fergie volunteered an *oath* in order to blast the character of a minister of the gospel, he forgot that, by that act, he had made *his own* a fair and legitimate subject of inquiry. Having stepped forward and offered to substantiate a very serious charge, preferred by an accuser, he has been made to stand a short time at the bar of public opinion, and subjected to a brief catechizing by the friends of the accused person. We are now told that this is very hard and cruel. The system of cross-questioning is well known to make sad havoc among a certain class of witnesses; and Mr. Fergie has written to us to say, that he is already a "much-injured brother." Letters have also been received from two publicans who have an "acquaintance with" Mr. F., and from three of his own workmen, assuring us that his character is perfectly good; but, unfortunately, having seen the *Lantern*, we cannot forget the hateful levity with which he offered to *take an oath*. We are further told by these persons that it is a "foul" and "scurrilous" thing in us to put any questions to the accuser, Pooley—to sift the character of this oath-taking witness—or to do any thing in order to procure for the accused preacher the benefit of something like a fair trial. They seem quite aware that it is an awkward thing for these assailants, when people presume to defend themselves. Whether or not, Mr. Jackson could procure any testimonials in his favour, signed by persons equally *independent and respectable* we cannot say; but we know that to some witnesses, who are very forward to give evidence and take oaths, a few plain questions are as terrible as the rack; and as Mr. Fergie's cries are loud, we infer that his uneasiness is considerable. The best "reparation" that we can make, is to advise him to learn wisdom by the things he has suffered, and, instead of being so eager to take, to begin to "fear an oath."

We hope, in a little time, to be able to offer a few remarks, on the "ineffable hypocrisy" of the Association. The Carlisle leaders, for instance, are filling the country with complaints about the "violation of law," on the part of their superintendent preacher, after having first secretly conspired, and then openly turned him out of the chair, at their last quarterly meeting.

Communications have been received from the following circuits, all of which convince us of the increasing attachment of the people to Methodism as it is, and of their determination to resist the attempts which are at present making to effect a revolution in a system which has hitherto, under the blessing of God, worked well, in the conversion of men from sin to holiness—viz., Leeds, London, Huntingdon, Southampton, Norwich, Stokesley, Bedford.

We also have received favours from "Alpha," "J. W." "Sigma," and "Israel."

Our Dudley correspondent shall receive due attention.

"A Voice from Leeds" "Review of John Gordon's speech at the Music Hall, Liverpool," shall appear in our next.

THE ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

No. 4. LIVERPOOL, FEB. 18, 1835. **Price 1½d.**

REMARKS ON MR. GORDON'S SPEECH AT THE MUSIC HALL MEETING, LIVERPOOL.

IN our analysis of the speech of Mr. Gordon we propose to place his objections against the present form of Methodism under distinct heads, that their bearing may be at once seen. As this speech is published by authority in the "*Lantern*," the regularly established vehicle of the Association, we take its principles to be the principles of that body, and shall animadvert upon them as such.

The first subject of Mr. Gordon's speech is THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CONFERENCE. He remarks "The Conference is composed of preachers alone. Individuals placed under any government, whether civil or ecclesiastical, should as a matter of natural right, have a share in that government."—"The Conference is composed solely of ministers, and is therefore unjustly constituted to be the ruling authority of the body."—"A body of preachers should not possess the ruling power in a connexion like that of Methodism." Again—"This fact is sufficient to prove to every considering mind, that the Conference should not be the ruling authority of the body." And again—"Besides this general principle, that governments should be so exercised that all the governed should have a share in it; these two facts demonstrate that of all parties, the Conference composed as it now is, ought not to have the ruling authority in our body."

These terms are not very exact and precise, but we may collect from them the doctrine, that now the Association, together with its friends and abettors, either object to the constitution of the Conference altogether, or propose to supersede it by the formation of an entirely new legislative and executive body. We are not sure but this latter is the true interpretation of their opinions and designs, not merely from the words of the above passages; but in a subsequent part of his speech, in exhorting the meeting to active measures, Mr. Gordon says, "you must make yourselves a Conference, and, if you can, place yourselves in the situation in which they have placed themselves with reference to the Methodist body, and all you want to do will be done."

We adduce these passages for the purpose of confronting the Association with itself. The intention of breaking up our present frame of

government was denied by the Association in the commencement of its reforming career; their avowed object then was—"to obtain from the Conference their consent to open its sittings to the public, under the following restrictions:—First, that the people shall sit apart from the preachers, and not be entitled to vote; and secondly, that each travelling preacher in full connexion be allowed to admit by ticket one person to each sitting of the Conference; excepting only when the characters of the preachers are under consideration, and when the members of the legalized fund are transacting their own peculiar business."

How the members of the Association will reconcile these passages we know not, or which of the three clashing and contradictory propositions they intend to rest upon.—The probability is, that, like all revolutionists, they will rest on nothing, but fancy after fancy will rise up before them, and the only fixed purpose in which they will find it possible to unite and act, is that of destroying whatever has a present existence. The progress made in the short space of about three months displays the fertility of their genius, and the active nature of the phrenzy by which they are impelled: Their rapid flight is extremely inconvenient to us, who do not happen to possess the same strength of pinion with themselves; for when we imagine we have overtaken them, and are about to argue some principle which they had assumed, or to defend some part of the Methodist economy which they had attacked—behold they are gone! have taken wing to another region, and are broaching new sentiments or committing new depredations. On this single question respecting Conference, we have three distinct opinions put forth in the short space of three months, and two of them in the course of one single speech at the Music Hall! We ask the Association, which they intend permanently to patronize?

First—They propose that the public shall be admitted to be spectators of the proceedings of Conference, without possessing the right to vote, leaving that body as to its constitution unaffected. This proposition must rest on some reason, and the only one we can suppose as actuating the Association is, that the preachers are in the habit of discharging their duties under the influence of corrupt motives—being led to it by what is usually denominated in the slang of the party, "the dominant faction;" that reasons insufficient—arguments specious, false, and untrue—representations grounded on deceptive and sophistical pleading—and threatening and coercion, are the means employed by this "*faction*" to gain the votes of the preachers. The presence of the public is to guard against these evils, and preserve impartiality and purity amongst this venerable meeting of corrupt and venal priests! Does the Association intend to cherish this bantling of their wisdom? If so, we can tell them that we know Methodist preachers who despise their suspicions, and are not afraid of public inspection. That the parties most exposed to their virulent reproach and hatred, are so on account of their public virtues; and because they possess an intelligence, judgment, fixedness of principle, and inflexible adherence to the doctrines and economy of Methodism which will not, because it conscientiously cannot, lend itself to the revolutionary mania of the day, and introduce untried novelties into a system which, under the blessing of God, has produced immense good in the world, are the objects of their vindictive malice and hate. If any persons in the Methodist Conference ought to court publicity, they are these much-injured men; and we are persuaded, that the disinterested, patriotic, and truly Methodistic principles which they have invariably advocated would enable them to bear away the prize of public favour. They have nothing to fear, and if popularity was their object, every thing to gain, by the presence of the public! But whilst we say this, we at the same time affirm that the principle itself is branded in the forehead with direct and palpable insult to the body of the preachers. What! will four hundred of God's ministers allow themselves, year after year, to be hood-winked or brow beaten into measures which in their consciences and judgment they disapprove? Will they lend themselves to support a "*faction*" to crush themselves, to usurp their rights, and trample on their own liberties? We do not affirm that all the decisions of the Conference are the best—for neither ourselves nor they pretend to infallibility, notwithstanding the foolish slanders on that subject; but we do say, that they are honestly come to: and although the notion of keeping men honest by the presence of the public may have something specious in it, our own opinion is, that there is much greater probability of impartiality and purity as it is at present constituted, than if the sittings were open to the public. Who does not know the influence of public feeling on party violence? Is it not next to certain, that if the proceedings and speeches of Conference were reported to the public, the connexion would instantly be split into parties and the gravity of its transactions be broken in upon by a gladiatorship of debate, either for public amusement, the gratification of party passions, or the elevation of the orator in

the esteem of those without? Nothing in our minds could be more odious than to behold the business of the church of God transacted with a view to pander to the passions of the public on the one hand, or to have the decisions of Conference overawed by its clamours on the other. The re-action of such a mode of procedure on the two parties, must be most injurious to both, and excite a state of interminable cavil and discord.

But why do we dwell on this subject of lay inspection. The Association *secondly* advocates the principle of a re-construction of the Conference itself. "The Conference is composed solely of ministers, and is, therefore, unjustly constituted to be the ruling authority of the body." The orator does not state in what this injustice consists. He makes no appeal to scriptural principle or precedent, to ecclesiastical history, or even to expediency. He merely affirms that as at present constituted, the Conference is *per se* unjust. If this be the case, the injustice does not rest with the present persons composing that body. They have usurped no power—they have created no functions—they have framed no constitution good or evil—they have laid no new platform of government. All that can be alleged against the existing Conference is, that finding a particular system planned by their predecessors, they have suffered themselves to be inducted into it, and believing it to have originated in the providential designation of God, and, in the main, working well, they have not lent themselves to destroy it. In most Methodist preachers it is likely that an impression in its favour exists, from the fact, that it was constituted by their venerable founder, that it bears the weight of nearly a century, that it has been defined and guarded by a legal enactment, that it has been subjected to the test of experiment, and has been found, like a sheet anchor, to be capable of holding the Wesleyan vessel in stormy seas, that it has administered the Gospel to an almost unparalleled extent for the time, that its proceedings have received the blessing of God in such a way, as to shew that it not only originated in his providence, but has, in its practical operation, been placed under his guidance. With these facts before them, connected with a just sense of responsibility to God and his church, we think the Wesleyan Ministers, and, we rejoice to say, not only the largest part, but nearly the whole community of Methodists, would steadfastly resist any infringement of the present constitution of the Conference.

But when the unlawfulness of the constitution of Conference is affirmed, some law must have been present to the mind of the speaker to which, in his apprehension, it is opposed. We should like to know what law it is to which he refers. If the Divine law is the one in question, will Mr. Gordon have the kindness to tell us *what part* of the sacred code the union of the Wesleyan preachers in Conference violates? We are not so absurd as to plead for the *jus divinum* of the Conference, or to argue that every other form of church polity is anti-scriptural and unlawful. But we do say, that the present form of church polity in the Methodist connexion, by a Conference of Ministers, connected as the actual government in the circuits is, with the united wisdom and piety of various officers of society, rests on grounds as good and scriptural as any thing the Association can have to propose.

The New Testament furnishes no platform of ecclesiastical government at all: it propounds great principles and furnishes precedents, but even those precedents are not uniform. The Bible baffles theorists in religious politics, as well as speculatists in doctrine; for here, as in other things, "the foolishness of God is wiser than man." What an unwieldy incumbrance must that which is in modern *parlance* denominated a constitution, have been to the first teachers of Christianity! They had no such THING in their commission—they preached the gospel, disciplined the people by baptism, formed them into church communion, instructed them in experimental religion, exercised such discipline as the occasion required, according to the word of their Divine master, and sometimes did it of their own authority, and at other times, called up the assistance of the church. The doctrines of the gospel were, in the early ages of the church, what they were in the early days of Methodism, grand *germinant* principles. The truth was left to operate freely in the minds of men, and of itself, under the simple guidance of the teacher, the church grew up to be a compact body. In this state of things, the great principles of Christianity were preserved, but the external state of the church was not exactly uniform; for, how could that be the case, when it was to exist in the midst of different nations of people, and of civil and ecclesiastical governments, both of which were opposed to Christianity. In the midst of this variety, one principle appears to be uniformly held, viz.—the distinction between the pastors of the church and the laity, together with the pastoral government of the ministers, sometimes singly and on their own authority, and sometimes united by council. The celebrated argument of Chillingworth in favour of episcopacy, as founded on this fact, has never been answered.

It is certain that the earliest ecclesiastical historians; fathers, and apologists, have

recorded nothing respecting lay elders or delegates. They were totally unknown in the primitive church. They had deacons for the management of their temporal affairs; but no lay elders or delegates to administer *scriptural discipline*, or at all interfere in the functions of the pastoral office. We are aware that the term Elder is often used in the New Testament, but uniformly in relation to persons holding the ministerial office. Though the spiritual gifts conferred on the primitive church were various, it is evident that the officers of the church were divisible into two classes—ministers and deacons. The ministers under various names preached the word, administered the ordinances, and had the spiritual charge of the church; and the deacons were appointed to attend upon the temporal business. This order appears to have gone down to the ages immediately following the Apostolic days, and became, under different shades and modifications, the settled state of things in the church. Where then is the unlawfulness of the Wesleyan ministers exercising that pastoral and spiritual government which they found in existence when they united with the body, and took on them, by the call of God, the ministerial office? It is not opposed to any law of Christ, to any practice of the primitive church; and, finding it to be the law of the connexion when they entered it, they have usurped no man's rights.

Then the question as to lay eldership, or delegation, is altogether reduced to a matter of expediency and utility. Setting aside for the present, the difficulties standing in the way of such a system, it may be well to test the principle by experience and fact. The Presbyterian churches of this country, it is well known, admitted the order of lay eldership. We are not sufficiently acquainted with the internal state of these churches to give a narrative of the manner in which the system worked, but with the result we are well informed. It is a notorious circumstance that these churches, in this nation, have not only lost every relic of what the orthodox consider vital piety, but they have, scarcely without an exception, sunk into Socinianism, and "denied the Lord that bought them."

We do not affirm that this corruption of Christian doctrine and loss of genuine religion has been occasioned by lay elders; but this fact is certain, that the evil is found to exist in connexion with this form of government; consequently, if lay elders did not occasion it, neither did they prevent it. Now the ostensible argument put forth in favour of a lay delegation in the Wesleyan connexion is, that it tends to the purity and freedom of the body. It may, for what we know, have tended in the Presbyterian churches to produce a morbid liberty—the liberty to indulge in latitudinarianism, terminating in practical scepticism; but has it preserved the ministry from corruption? It has broken down under this system of lay eldership, and the wreck has been next to universal.

We have no doubt, though unable to trace the thing historically, that the connection between lay eldership and this denial of "the faith once delivered to the saints," exists as cause and effect. It is natural it should: let spiritual government be placed in any community in secular hands, and from the well-known influence of wealth and rank, it will fall into the hands of that class of professing Christians. Then is it not in the nature of things that these should carry a leaven of worldly influence with them into the church? This, may at first, be gradual—and, indeed, imperceptible: but accommodation to the world, the desire to live fair in its eye, to blend in its pleasures, and stand on as elevated a pinnacle as others, is a natural feeling to those who are in the world.

Be this as it may, it is not necessary to our argument. We have the appalling fact, that a body of ministers associated with a system of church government, embracing the *beau ideal* of ecclesiastical polity, and advocated by many of our Methodist reformers, becoming gradually, and in less time than Methodism has existed, first Arian and then Socinian! The probability is, that the two classes of men thus associated in the government of the church, corrupted each other and fell together. The most likely course to preserve the purity of any ministry is to let it stand on its own peculiar ground—separated from the laity altogether; pledged to the holiness and spirituality of the pastoral office; and with the obligations of the New Testament resting upon it. By uniting the laity and preachers in the same offices, you push the ministers of the sanctuary from this isolated ground, and, by identifying them with secular character and habits, gradually sink them to the same state. If in synod and Conference the merchant and tradesman may take his place, for the purpose of exercising the power and rights of a governor in the spiritual affairs of the church of Christ, what should hinder the minister in his turn appearing with the same parties to take part in the secularities of the world?

The most recent trial of this union of the secular and pastoral character in the

government of the church, has been made by the Methodist New Connexion. Not belonging to the age when this connexion was formed by a division from the old stock, we do not at all participate in the passions and prejudices of those times; and are, we believe, able to look upon it with the same catholic spirit as upon any other branch of the professing church. Our impression is, that their ministers and communion are intelligent, respectable, and pious. They have enjoyed internal peace: there has been no deviation from sound doctrine, and—saving a few recent matters—they and their old friends have maintained a respectful bearing towards each other. But, as a Methodist Connexion, it has not answered the expectations of its founders and friends. Methodism in most of its branches, has been considered an aggressive system; and its ministers have never evinced much satisfaction unless inroads were being made on the territories of our spiritual foes, sinners converted to God, and the societies constantly augmented. It is in this respect that the New Connexion must have disappointed its friends: for after existing nearly forty years, and having several preachers, about five thousand members, and numerous chapels to begin with, and we may fairly suppose, an accession at least of individuals from our own body—during the whole period, they only now number about *fifteen* thousand members! This it will be seen, is not, according to our Methodist notions, a *prosperous growth*. Whether the lay delegation has hung as a dead weight upon the wheels of the machine, we have no means of ascertaining; but here is the fact: we have a mixed system of government in Conference, (for out of Conference the old connexion is equally a mixed government,) and from some cause or other, it has not increased with the same rapidity as the old connexion: we therefore imagine, that it wants the unity—and, consequently, the energy which unity produces, and which is possessed by the old body. We are aware that an argument has been set up founded on the principle of geometrical progression, to shew, that the New Connexion has augmented its numbers more rapidly than the old. This respectable writer must have forgotten to take into consideration the fact, that on this principle every new aggression on the unoccupied territory of the world lessens the amount of material to be operated upon; and, in the nature of things, it may be expected, that a large body cannot, as the sphere of its operations lessens in any particular place, augment with the same rapidity as when they were small; and, as Dr. Chalmers would say, the outdoor population great. It strikes us, that the fair way of comparison would be to take the period when the old connexion numbered five thousand members—follow its progress for forty years; at the end, take the total, and compare it with the progress made by the New connexion. It will then be found by this mode of admeasurement, that the Old system operated with much greater vigour and effect on the masses of the people than the New. We deny all invidious feeling, or improper motive, in introducing this question: our honest wish is, that this respectable off-shoot of the old tree may thrive and bear good fruit, and our only intention is to shew the members of our own body and the Association that, in the particular adduced, the New Connexion has not come up to our notions of progress and growth. With nothing to begin with—no chapels, no coadjutors, no members of society: in the teeth of the world, its prejudices and passions in array against them: mobs, tumults, and missiles of every description, obstructing their exertions—the two Wesleys laid the foundations of the societies; and with the assistance of the few labourers who came to their aid, increased their numbers from 1744, the period when the first Minutes were published, to 1782—thirty-eight years, (the time the New Connexion has existed) to 46,331 members. This is more than treble the amount of progress made by the New Connexion, in circumstances certainly more favourable, as regards the external state of things, than fell to their lot. We are unacquainted with the internal state of this branch of the Methodist family—we hope it is good; but they have not put forth externally that energy of action which is indicative of united and vigorous counsels. It is perfectly true that a body of ministers, such as the Wesleyan Conference, may be guilty of some worldly indiscretions, from which the presence of the lay-delegates might save them; but there must be a balance of advantage in favour of the healthy, vigorous, and united efforts of the Old Connexion to extend the gospel, in the fact that their operations are not impeded by these over nice maxims of worldly prudence. We are not advocates for rash and foolish experimenting in religion, but it is highly probable, that if the preachers of the New Connexion had been left to form their own plans, to rest on their own resources and exertions, to contemplate the spiritual ruin and wants of the world, through the medium of those views which their commission teaches, without the *patronage, counsels, and calculations* of lay delegates, they would have made much greater progress. The wants of the world, and the danger and ruin of souls must not be looked at through the medium of worldly notions of prudence; but through the lessons of Scripture and the love of redemption.

But perhaps we are troubling ourselves to no purpose on this topic, for—*thirdly*—the Association, through Mr. Gordon, speaks of establishing a Conference of their own, and transmuting the Association into this new formation:—"You must make yourselves a Conference, *and if you can*, place yourselves in the situation in which they have placed themselves, with reference to the Methodist body, and all you want to do will be done." It is with extreme difficulty we write this sentence, without yielding to great risibility; a multitude of thoughts rush upon us to excite this feeling—but we must forbear.

I.—He denounces the Wesleyan Conference as unlawful: an unjust, unconstitutional, and, consequently, illegal assembly. This is one of the topics of his discourse. Then he adds, "You must make *yourselves* into a Conference: and, that we may understand he does not simply mean a meeting or assembly, he adds, "place yourselves in the situation in which they have placed themselves, with reference to the Methodist body." Now this is most amusing! We always thought, the gentlemen of the Association would have no great objection to the exercise of ecclesiastical rule: it is now avowed.

2.—Mr. Gordon tells us that the Methodist Conference stands in a wrong relation to the body of the people. The Conference "is unjustly constituted to be the ruling authority of the body:" "individuals placed under any government should, as a natural right, have a share in that government." Then, with wonderful consistency, he exhorts the Association and meeting to make themselves a Conference: "in relation to the Methodist body," such as the one now in existence. So then, it seems, that Mr. Gordon and his friends have no objections to stand in the same relation to the Methodist body as the Conference—though that relation, he tells us, ought not to exist!! They do not say whether the connexion is to be blessed with two instead of one of these good things. We suppose, their intention is not to favour the Methodist public with an additional Conference, but to subvert the old, rotten borough, and enfranchise a new one: the old black coats, bushy wigs, bright barnacles, and thread-bear theology are to be bundled out; and the "gill men"—but we stop, enthroned in their place.—How different things can stand in similar situations, we do not yet understand. For instance—in what way a Conference of laymen can stand in the same relation to the Wesleyan body as a Conference of ministers, we have yet to learn. Perhaps, Mr. Gordon will inform us the next speech he makes in the Music Hall.

3.—But our Solon and Cicero, united in the same person, tells us in many parts of his speech, in effect—that the government by a Conference of preachers is unjust and wrong, because not elective; and the notion of inherent rights is nonsense—and the preachers have no power but what is given by the people. On reading this our impression was, that of course the system of representation was that of our oracle. Deceive not thyself, gentle reader, he goes on to exhort the Association to "*make themselves* into a Conference." Not to seek for themselves the free, unbiassed, independent suffrages of the people—but to *make themselves* a Conference, and place themselves in the same relation to the Methodist body as the present. Our orator knew whom he had to address: that they were the same parties who had formed *themselves* into a "Grand central Association;" had passed resolutions to affect the interests of the whole connexion—carry confusion into the societies—overawe and coerce the constitutional meetings—and by intimidation and slander bring the people into their views. Prepared by these previous acts of audacious usurpation, he judges that they would not hesitate to do on a larger scale that which, in fact, they had done already; and that the self-elected Association could not object to become a self-elected Conference. But in the midst of all this, what becomes of the principle of representation and delegated rights? They argue, that the preachers have no *inherent rights*: their powers are all conferred by the people; and if they claim to exercise any which *they* do not give, it is a gross fraud and usurpation; and then, with a strange inconsistency, they propose to "*form THEMSELVES into a Conference.*" From all this, one of two things must be evident to the merest child: the *first* is, that these men know not what they are saying and doing; or, *secondly*, are playing off a gross fraud on our people and the world, when they accuse the preachers and the Conference as possessing and exercising an illegal, arbitrary, and tyrannic power—for they openly propose to possess and wield it themselves. Let them take which alternative they please. On the horns of this dilemma we place and leave them.

But there is in this proposition respecting the election of themselves into a Conference a most laughable proviso. It is found in the term; *if you can*: "You must make yourselves into a Conference, and, *if you can*, place yourselves in the situation in which they have placed themselves, in reference to the Methodist body." Yes: here is the rub—"if you can." This misgiving seems hardly to comport with the firm and courageous bearing of this noble phalanx of reformers in other parts of their proceedings. We were given to understand, that the old fabric was tottering to its fall; and after losing heart, the residents were about to quit it! What, then, do the Association, after all, really believe that there is some doubt respecting their success! That the old garrison have hardihood enough to stand a siege! Yes; and we can tell these gentlemen that they are not only prepared to stand a siege, but are resolved to repel every attack of theirs; and they would deem themselves the most dastardly and base betrayers of a noble cause that ever turned their back on an enemy, if they yielded one *tota* to foes of *their size and strength*. Let Mr. Gordon and his friends read the fate of their frantic and mischievous proceedings in the declarations of the connexion. We do not despise them: we despise no men; but if the Methodist connexion is to fall before this array of *imbecility*, it is not worth preserving: for it cannot have vigour enough to keep it for any length of time from self-decomposition. But we know the amount of intelligence, principle, and piety of the connexion too well to have any apprehension for its safety. We tell Mr. Gordon and his compeers that they *cannot* carry their point; and the sooner they come to their sober senses the better, both for themselves and all parties concerned.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—The party, which arrogates to itself the title of "Wesleyan Methodist Association," may be said to have had their "field day" at the Music Hall, on Thursday, the 22d of January. They mustered all their forces, tried their newest system of tactics, and practised their manœuvres. Of the efficiency of that system, and the nature of their manœuvres, I may, perhaps, give you my opinion one of these days. For the present, I shall content myself with some little notice of one of their preliminary arrangements.

Advertisements were inserted in the public papers, calling the meeting of the Association at the Music Hall, in which was included this announcement:—"The preachers of both circuits *have been* invited to attend." Now the preachers had *not* "been invited to attend," and the statement contained a falsehood; but, as invitations were subsequently sent, though days afterwards, I will not dwell on that point, but proceed to notice the intent of the framers of the advertisement, in "inviting the preachers to attend." To the mass of readers, it would doubtless, as intended, convey an impression of fairness and honesty on the part of the associators. To all who had any knowledge of the character and previous conduct of the Association, it seemed, what it afterwards proved to be, the semblance only of fairness, and a mask of honesty. "Invited to attend!" For what? To hear themselves and the whole body of the preachers called "despotic," "tyrannical," "dishonest," "men with whom no honest man can longer associate," &c. To be insulted, as in the Leeds-street vestry, and reviled, as they have been in all places, whether absent or present? To hear the whole structure of Methodism, which they know to be

blessed of God, to the salvation of hundreds of thousands, and which they have spent their whole lives in upholding, condemned, as "not based on truth and righteousness"? No, no! The associators could not hope for this. Again—for what? To afford them an opportunity calmly to discuss the points in dispute? Oh! No, no! The preachers could not hope for this. Even by demeaning their sacred office and character, and consenting to meet, in a public and packed assembly, their rebellious and expelled disciples, they could not hope for this. The meetings at Leeds, Bolton, and elsewhere, proved too plainly how much danger the associators apprehended from, and their dread of, discussion. That their temper and feelings have not been altered by time, I will show before I have done. "Invited to attend," then, implied no more than a hypocritical assumption of fair play, intended to impose on the uninformed and on the unwary. It pledged the associators to nothing.* They knew the preachers could not attend; and, if by chance it should have happened otherwise, they had not promised any thing.

But I said an invitation was at length sent to the preachers. Having fortunately obtained a copy of the precious document, I send it you, and will illuminate it, in order to save you so much trouble. *En voici—*

"Rev. Sir—A Meeting of the Members of the Methodist Society will be held at the Music Hall, Bold-street, on Thursday next, 22d January, at half-past six o'clock in the evening, for the purpose of hearing a report of the proceedings of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, and of discussing the topics which now agitate the Connexion.

"As it has been held out repeatedly to the public by means of the press, that the statements of the Association are untrue, and their alleged grievances fictitious, full opportunity will be given at this Meeting for any preacher or official character to reply to the instances brought forward of repeated violations of the laws of 1795 and 1797.—Yours very respectfully,

J. A. PICTON, } Secretaries.
JOHN BRIDSON, }

Liverpool, 19th January, 1835.

The first paragraph I pass with the observation only, that the word *discussing* is either not understood, or its meaning has been foolishly perverted by the associators at their meetings, where they have substituted for discussion a new topic of statements, be they true or false.

The second paragraph is more pithy, "as it has been held out," &c., conveys to us the intelligence, that the associators were aware and winced under the fact, of the press having branded their statements with falsehood, and their grievances as fictitious. By the notable promise of "a full opportunity of reply," which follows they flattered themselves they would remove the stigma. But when I find how "false" and "fictitious" was this promise itself, as demonstrated by the result of the meeting, I am bound to say the press was right. "Preachers and official characters" are promised "a full opportunity of reply." Here we have the associators venturing upon a little more than was contained in the advertisement.

* As if, and, to all appearance, for the purpose of making assurance doubly sure, and effectually secure themselves from the dreaded interruption, the meeting was suddenly ordered to take place a day sooner than intended, and a Thursday evening was selected, of all others, in order to give the preachers "a full opportunity;" that is, an evening when they were all engaged, as the associators were well aware, in the service of their respective chapels.

Here is a *private* assurance of fair play on the part of the Association, which they dared not make publicly, lest the public should have expected its fulfilment. What they feared to publish, you, Sir, shall publish for them; and though it will be too late to keep them honest, it will, at least, expose their fraud.

Well, then, "statements" were made in abundance, and "grievances" alleged by the associators (including the *Reverend* innkeeper), and an "official character" *did* rise to reply. His party had been ridiculed—his pastors slandered—his church government held up to contempt and abhorrence—and all this by men who professed to love that church, and to desire its welfare and extension. He might well expect to be favourably heard while pleading its cause—while endeavouring to dispel erroneous views—to reconcile conflicting statements—and to promote harmony among its members. In addition to this reasonable expectation, there was the plain, irrevocable promise of the Association, signed by its secretaries, that he, an "official character," should have "a full opportunity of reply." Such honour as the Association had, was pledged to secure to him this full "opportunity." And how was that honour redeemed? What became of the sanctity of the pledge? Scarcely was a sentence uttered when he was met by a storm of uproar, cries, and threats, that lasted for several minutes. Again he threw himself upon the candour of the meeting, and ventured on the honour of the Association, for the "full opportunity of reply." What the meeting might, perhaps, have granted, the Association took care to refuse. Candour and honour fled at the prospect of opposition and confutation. The *Reverend* (?) Mr. Gordon demanded the interference of the chair, and the *honourable, impartial* chairman (Farrar, by name—let him be immortalized!) nothing loath, extinguished by his authority, the unfounded hopes of fair play, which the "official character" had entertained. Even the garbled report which the associators themselves have circulated in their organ, the *Lantern*, cannot cover the enormity of this breach of a plain promise. What are their own admissions? They confess the "official character" was stopped by "much cheering and laughter" (the Association's terms for immense uproar, cries of "turn him out," "sit down," &c.) Again, says the *Lantern*, "one Walthew was proceeding with his observations upon the dispute between the Conference and the Association, when

Mr. Gordon (not *everend* this time) put it to the chairman, whether *any individual had a right* to interrupt the meeting, except for the sake of explanation.

The Chairman (Farrar!) thought they certainly did not come there to hear speeches against their right to associate."!!!

Excellent Farrar! Inimitable chairman! Embodied emblem of the principles of the Association!

I ask you, Sir—I ask any man, not an associator, was there

even common honesty observed here? No, Sir; not even the semblance.

Thus was the "official character" treated. Such was the indignity intended for the "Preachers," whom also they profess to revere.

What cause can that be, which is propped by such arts, such faithlessness as I have exposed? What reliance can be placed on men, who regard not truth nor their plighted word? What compromise can be made with those, who associate but to deceive and to destroy—to whom faction is religion, and truth and honour are unknown?

I would not be understood to mean, that all who have dabbled in this Association are to be thus characterised. There may be, there are some, who have been misled, and who will repent; but I speak of the associators in their associated character, than which nothing can be baser or more malignant, and those, who submit to be joined in the unholy union, cannot expect even their own personal character to remain long unsullied.

This letter of invitation, but not inviting letter, was of course the work of the collective associators. The honour of each man was pledged. The chairman has for ever forfeited all pretention to it. He, who was the representative of the faith of his party, has charged himself with the full weight of its dishonour. We have yet to learn which of the associators has the manliness and virtue to resent the slur which has dimmed his individual fame. Still more will it be curious to observe how those, who, in their official characters as secretaries, have been made the active instruments of chicanery and falsehood, how they, J. A. Picton and John Bridson, will rescue themselves from the foul shame, which clings to them. They cannot deny their knowledge of the pledge. There are their own signatures attached to it. Did they remonstrate with the chairman, when he belied himself and them? Did they earnestly entreat him and the meeting to grant the "full opportunity of reply?" Did they insist that their integrity would be compromised, their plighted word a mockery, their character dishonoured before the whole world? No, none of this. And will they now do that which alone remains for them, if they have a spark of honourable feeling? Will they resent the injury which has been done them, and abandon their connexion with the Association; or, will they be content to be known as authors as well as instruments of the foul thing? We shall see. We shall see. In the mean time, I will but apply to the Association their own celebrated phrase, "no honest man can longer remain among them."—Yours truly,

PROBUS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—In an article contained in a former number of the *Watchman's Lantern*, I find an attempt made to establish the fact that the apostles of the primitive church employed the co-operation of

laymen, not merely in the temporal affairs of the church, but also in its government; whereas it applied solely, in the instance referred to, to the management of the funds appropriated to the poor, widows, &c.; the deacons, or, as the word originally signifies, servants, being appointed to take care of and distribute the alms collected for that purpose; nor can we at all infer that subsequently they were ever invested with authority to legislate in ecclesiastical matters. The number of disciples having greatly increased at Jerusalem, the Hellenistic Jews murmured against the Hebrews, complaining that their widows were neglected in the daily distribution of the church's bounty. The twelve Apostles who had hitherto discharged this office, convened the church, saying: "It is not reasonable that we should leave the ministration of the word of God and serve tables. Look ye out seven men whom *we* shall appoint" (καταστήσομεν), and not "whom *ye* may appoint," as the writer in the *Lantern* chooses to quote it, and on this misquotation arrogate to the people the power to appoint their own officers, and to these subordinate officers, the right to intermeddle with church government, as he sagely infers,—“Although we have no minute record of church government, we have amply sufficient to prove, that laymen were associated with their ministers on *all* important occasions.” If the plea for the introduction of laymen into the Conference rests on no better a footing than this, it falls to the ground at once; and we would advise the writer, whoever he be, to be more accurate for the future in his quotations, especially if they are to form the basis of an argument.

Such however is a specimen of the fallacious reasoning, which men impelled by party zeal, or who take but partial views of truth, will employ;—but when, with profane hands they take the word of God, and wilfully pervert its meaning to answer interested and sinister ends, deep indeed must be the depravity, and desperate the hardihood which can venture over the sacred threshold of divine truth, and sacrilegiously appropriate to their unhallowed purposes the words of inspired Scripture “*Procul este profani!*” We may always suspect that cause to be intrinsically bad, which requires the aid of sophistry to justify it. To promote truth, it is not necessary to have recourse to the tortuous windings and tricks of artifice; and when the clear and sober deductions of right reason are laid aside for specious fallacies, we may rest assured that error lies concealed beneath the folds of sophistry, however nicely adjusted, which will not bear the light of fair and open investigation.

“As creeping ivy clings to wood or stone,
And hides the ruin that it feeds upon,
So sophistry cleaves close to and protects,
Sin's rotten trunk, concealing its defects.”

Liverpool, February, 16th.

Y. Z.

Miscellanea.

CANADIAN GUARDIAN AND THE AGITATORS.

“When an individual rises in the church, and acquires influence and importance in his neighbourhood, he is tempted to think that his means, and information, and standing in society, claim for him more controul in the management of church affairs. He begins to speculate upon questions of church order, and abstract right, and balance of power, &c. &c., until, aided perhaps by some republican theory, he sees his rights invaded at every turn, his principles trampled upon in every arrangement and appointment of the pastors of the church, though they be the same in every thing, but in name, with the acts and duties of the same body from the beginning. In the meditations, feelings, and conversation of a person thus exercised, questions of church order usurp the place of Christian experience, and plans to implicate and oppose the ministers of the word are devised, instead of efforts to aid forward the work; and suspicion and uncharitableness take the place of charity and brotherly kindness, until peace within and without are lost in the chaos of rankling passion and unhallowed contention, which results in the hardening of sinners without, and the grieving and withdrawing of the spirit of God within, or an open schism in the church. The whole of this may perhaps be traced to individuals who have been exalted in society by the desire and effort of intellectual improvement, and the blessing of God upon their labours, which was acquired through the instrumentality of Methodism, and who are strangely urged on, under some pretext or another, to do all in their power to injure and oppose the very ministry by which they have been turned from darkness unto light, and by the productions and under the labours of which they have been nurtured to their present standing in society. How often has a Christian ministry cause to adopt the language of Isaiah to the Jews, who, in their success and prosperity forgot the source of it, ‘I have brought up children and they have rebelled against me.’ Seldom has any schism in the church ever been commenced by a person in low condition of life; but almost invariably by those who have acquired their all of property and influence in the church. Very many examples of this kind are recorded in Mr. Wesley’s Journals.

“Another cause of schism in the church is political party spirit. By this we mean, not an adherence to certain principles of civil polity, and the upholding of them; but the boiling of party feeling, the despotism of party tyranny, and the slavish subjection to party combination. This is one form of the spirit of the world, as withering to soul-prosperity as the spirit of the world under any other form. On whatever side it hoists the party banner, the plant of heavenly-mindedness and genuine Christianity withers

under its shade, and dies while it is yet floating on the breeze. Look at Christianity as portrayed in the New Testament Christians, and how infinitely above and how diametrically opposite to such a spirit! They were firm in the maintenance of their individual rights, yet peaceably and truly submissive to existing authorities, and were never found, for three hundred years, associated in any combinations or plots to oppose their fellow citizens, or subvert the existing government. They had another calling—they had received another spirit. And, whatever party spirit takes possession of any religious community, it produces barrenness, strife, and schism. Its shouts are not the shouts of the king in the camp of Israel—its songs are not the songs of Zion—its festivals are not the feasts of the Lord of Hosts. We have indeed known persons to secede from the church, because it was not loyal enough; we have known others to renounce it because it was too loyal. In both cases the political good of this world was equally predominant; and in both cases was the church alike relieved and benefitted. One enemy within the walls of a city can do more harm than a thousand without. In every such case the church has but one duty—to go straight forward, not trusting in man, or making flesh its arm.”

DR. WARREN AND HIS LAW-SUIT.

Our readers doubtless with ourselves were not surprised when they heard of proceedings instituted in chancery, by the *now* celebrated Dr. Warren. Indeed the measures he has taken since last Oct. to alienate himself from the connexion wherein he obtained his spiritual benefit, have been of such a character that we are fully prepared to hear of means the most fatal to his own peace and prosperity, and, as far as his influence extended, awfully injurious to the edification of others—adopted and followed by him with reckless obstinacy and perverseness. A bill has been filed in chancery, at the suit of four of the trustees of the Wesley chapel, Oldham-road, Manchester, and Dr. Warren, against the ten other trustees, and the Rev. R. Newton, and seeks the re-instatement of Dr. Warren in the pulpit of the chapel referred to. A second bill has also been filed by Dr. Warren alone, against all the trustees of Oldham-street chapel and Mr. Newton, having in view a similar object. The infatuation which has marked this step of the Doctor, fully justifies ourselves in the opinion which we have long entertained of his singular and unhallowed career. One object contemplated by this Methodistical anarchist may be answered, and which perhaps is the only one which he has in view, namely, that of keeping alive in his immediate neighbourhood the feeling of agitation and discord, which has been evidently on the decline for some time past. This is the worthy Doctor's sheet anchor.—What has been said of Ireland's great agitator:—“Tranquillize Ireland and his occupation is gone.” So with the case before us.

Let the spirit of grace and supplication be poured upon the Methodist societies in Manchester and Liverpool, and the learned Doctor descends to "the tomb of all the Capulets," and his fame will but occupy a few lines in the page of Methodistic history—an awful warning to all individuals, who, influenced by the evil one, set themselves to war against the church of the living God, to appease the turbulence of an angry and malevolent spirit roused into destructive energy by mortified pride and disappointed ambition. We cannot but consider the case of Dr. Warren a hopeless one: this we are confident he will prove to his own cost, and to the expense of his equally infatuated followers, when the case is fully heard before his honor the Vice Chancellor, in whose court we understand the case will be heard. We also rejoice with the friends of Methodism, that the defendants have secured the services of Sir Wm. Horne, a gentleman who has fully studied the various bearings of affairs similar to this, which, together with his vast practice, and commanding talents, would lead us to anticipate the most triumphant results, even were there any part of the case of a dubious character. But this there is not. Lawsuits cannot be carried on without money, and consequently in page 79 of the *iniquitous Lantern*, we read, "It must be well known that a legal undertaking like the one I have mentioned, cannot be commenced and carried on without considerable expence, and to whom have we to appeal, but to the friends of genuine (!) religious liberty? The *prompt* forwarding of any sums which may be collected for this purpose will be, I have no doubt, particularly acceptable!" We believe it. So those deluded individuals who have joined the Association, and who have been so earnestly entreated to withdraw all their support from the Missionary (!), Chapel, and Contingent Funds, are most coolly, and with an impudence doubly bronzed, are unblushingly called upon to support a most flagrant violation of gospel precept (*see 1st Cor. vi. 1, &c.*)

THE LANTERN AND THE METHODIST MAGAZINE.

We have been much amused by the vituperative language used by our contemporary, the *Lantern*, respecting this periodical; because, forsooth, the editor does not lend his pages to foster the the spirit of anarchy and disunion, for which the Association was formed. This appears to be the sole *calling* of the *Lantern*. The leading article of this publication, in two recent numbers, contained strictures on certain declarations from various circuits, expressive of their firm and unflinching attachment to the constitution and discipline of Methodism, as it is now administered. With these declarations the editor of the *Lantern* is much offended, and therefore endeavours to exhibit these documents, and the gentlemen whose names are affixed to them as unworthy of notice or regard. This, to say the least of it, is most uncourteous, especially when the great majority of them are altogether unknown to the editor.

But because they pursue an opposite line of conduct, are cordial friends of Methodism, think for themselves, and judge proper to express the opinions they entertain of the unjustifiable and wicked movements of the Association, in order to guard the people from being led away by their devices, and to encourage those who labour among them in the word and doctrine, this editor publishes to the world, that they are "ignorants"—under the guidance of "Captain Rock or Swing, who have again revived"—"prepared to do battle with green bill and blade"—"guilty of gross falsehoods," &c. &c. That these declarations excited the ire of the editor we fully believe; indeed, if this had not been the case, we should have had reason for regret instead of pity, which we now feel.

The language which the *Lantern* uses in representing to the public the insignificance of these documents, is characteristic of a sinking-cause. The editor may say what he pleases, but the agitation which for a short time existed, is nearly subsided: the character and object of which are now understood and condemned by a vast majority of our people. To revive the dying embers, numerous methods are employed: an extra number of the *Lantern* appears, and a few of the trustees of London publish a document recommending a new system of Wesleyan discipline. The restless spirit of several of the individuals signing this declaration, is well known; many of whom have no other connexion with the Methodist community; and some others are pious, single-hearted men, but possess no talent for concocting schemes of ecclesiastical government.—This paper has made no impression on our London societies, and we are convinced will produce little or none elsewhere. We understand that a member of the committee of the Liverpool Association, and recently expelled from the society of the Liverpool south circuit, vainly imagines that by certain papers he has lately inserted in one of the public prints of Liverpool, he has touched the spring, which has brought before the Methodist world this document from the London trustees; we can assure him to the contrary.

DR. WARREN AT HULL.

THE MEETING IN SYKES-STREET.—As an advertisement appeared last Thursday morning, stating that a public meeting would be held in the Tabernacle, on Wednesday evening, the 11th instant, by a combination, improperly calling itself a Wesleyan Methodist Association; and as there was cause to suspect that the meeting was clandestinely organised by some persons in Hull, a special leaders' meeting was held last Monday evening, in Waltham-street chapel vestry, when the leaders present adopted, by a majority of fifty against eight, the following expression of their views and sentiments:—

"Having learned from various papers specially addressed to the members of this meeting, and from other publications now in circulation, the nature and objects of an association in Manchester, designating itself the Grand Central Association; and having learned also that an attempt is now about to be made in a public meeting, by strangers from a distance, to gain adherents to that cause, by disturbing the peace and harmony subsisting in the Hull circuit: This meeting deems it a solemn duty to express its entire disapprobation of the principles and proceedings of that body, and determines to refrain from all co-operation with those who may endeavour to promote similar ends by the adoption of the like illegal and improper means, and to support the superintendent in the exercise of Methodistic discipline,"

Last Friday evening, the chairman was asked if those who got up the meeting intended to allow freedom of discussion. His reply was, that he could not give a definite or positive answer, but he believed it would be permitted. The most decisive measures were, however, taken to prevent all discussion. When the front doors were opened, the gallery was generally seated, by persons who had been *privately* admitted, no doubt for *wise* purposes; two of the Wesleyan ministers, who attended with the design of giving light on the subjects which might come before the audience, though perfectly well known to be ministers, found it very difficult to gain admission after repeated refusals. Soon the doors were thrown open to all persons indiscriminately; the chairman, in his opening speech, distinctly announced that no discussion would be allowed, and police officers were placed in various parts of the chapel, to seize any who should urge discussion. The addresses of the agitators contained little or no information to those who had read their publications. They were, as usual, highly seasoned with misrepresentation, scurrility, bombast, affected piety, and love of Methodism.—The meeting must not be considered as Wesleyan—an overwhelming majority of the persons present were not members of the Wesleyan society, and the object of the speakers was evidently not to promote, but to revolutionize, the Wesleyan polity. A great deal of uproarious applause was given to the speakers, but we were pleased to observe that in this very few Wesleyans participated.—*Hull Packet, of February, 13.*

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We beg to congratulate our readers, on the accomplishment of a great part of our work, as *Illuminators*, in holding up to the public the “ineffable hypocrisy” of the ring-leaders of the Association.—The rays of *light* which we have been enabled to throw upon their nefarious designs, has, like the touch of Ithuriel’s spear, forced them from their position, “squat like a toad” at the ear of honest-hearted Methodists, and “up they start, discovered and surprised, their lustre visibly impaired—but seem undaunted.”—The third part of the Catechism of the Association is before us; and we do not hesitate to say that this unprincipled and wicked pamphlet will, with all unprejudiced minds, do more to assist the cause of Methodism as it is, and serve to unite the preachers and people in one common spirit of a calm defiance of the efforts of these double-faced agitators, than we could hope to effect by our endeavours. Why should it not be known that several of these Agitators, on the 8th instant, in the Leeds-street chapel, actually *elbowed* their way past the Steward, who quietly attempted to prevent their approach to the sacramental rail, and then and there did these men awfully profane that holy ordinance by receiving the sacred memorials of our dying Lord from the hands of one of those, who, if only half be true what these men *speechify* and publish concerning them, ought to be stoned or placed in the stocks, rather than be recognised by any man as administrators at the Table of the Lord; and then, in perfect keeping with all the rest, they subsequently publicly abused the Steward for the faithful performance of his duty, in endeavouring to prevent this detestable profanation. Can we illuminate this bare-faced hypocrisy further? Let our readers judge!

Communications have been received from “A Lover of Methodism,”—“Polycarp,”—“R. A.,”—“Mentor,”—“M.,”—“Sigma,”—“An Observer,”—“and R. Garside,”—“A Voice from Leeds,” on account of great *press of matter* is unavoidably postponed until the next number.—We shall be glad to receive the promised communication from our correspondent in Hull.

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION ;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES ; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY ; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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MR. GORDON'S SPEECH—ALLEGED IRRESPONSIBLE POWER OF THE CONFERENCE.

After dwelling on the unjust and illegal constitution of the Conference, Mr. Gordon next proceeds largely to discant on the power it exercises. Amongst other things he affirms it to be irresponsible : "one other thing is to be observed of this power, the source of all the evil ; that is to say, it is altogether *irresponsible, absolute, and arbitrary*. Nothing interferes with it, and no check whatever is placed upon it." We refer now to this topic, not merely because it forms so prominent a part of this speech, but as affording the opportunity of remark on a most fruitful subject of declamation in these times of turbulence and debate. Some skill and dexterity is certainly evinced in the selection of this, as well as other questions of misrepresentation ; for nothing in the zenith of our national freedom, can be more abhorrent to British feeling, than the notion of irresponsible power. Besides, when this power is supposed to exist in a priestly form, the annunciation of the fact instantly excites in the public mind an instinctive sensation of disgust and horror. We fear it has been so often dwelt upon, and reiterated in the ears of our people, that great numbers of them, whilst possessed of perfect freedom, have been led to believe that they are held in fetters, by a system of priestly despotism which far exceeds popery in its hey-day of power.

Let us examine this question of irresponsible power with fairness and candour. The proposition is made in general terms, leaving us to infer, that the Wesleyan body of ministers are exalted above responsibility of any kind. We beg to remind Mr. Gordon and the Association that there are more kinds of responsibility than one ; that a child is responsible for its behaviour to its parents ; a subject to the government under which he lives, as well as a delegated person to his constituents. Now, when it is affirmed, that "the Conference and preachers in their circuits are irresponsible, and no check whatever is placed upon them," the subject must be examined as a *whole*, and because they are not responsible in one peculiar way, it will not follow that they are not responsible in another. If, for instance, the officers of any system, defined and established by law, instead of being responsible to the variable opinion of the living world, are bound by the laws and institutions of the department to which they belong, are in this case under a complete state of accountability. The case of the

Church of England or of Scotland may afford us illustration. In these two churches,—rightly or wrongly we do not now say,—the great doctrines and laws of religion, instead of being left to be moulded and fashioned by the popular voice of every succeeding age, have been settled as permanently fixed and established as formularies and rites, and who will say that the clergy serving at the altar of these national churches are irresponsible. They are not responsible to their assembled parishioners convened annually, at the hustings, to propose questions and give them a commission for a new term to preach the gospel. But although not subject to this mode of responsibility, they are “under the law” of the church. In like manner the Methodist polity has grown up gradually as occasion required—rules have been framed for the government of the preachers and people, and to these laws the parties are bound. It will be found, on a candid investigation of the subject, that no ministers on earth are placed under a more strict surveillance of law examination, and supervision; and that no Christian community has so many guarantees for the general purity of their own ministry as the Methodists.

1. When Mr. Gordon asserts that the Conference and the preachers are in the exercise of an irresponsible power, that “nothing interferes with it, and that no check whatever is placed upon it,” we would ask him if he has forgotten that the Methodists have the Bible in their hands? Are not the preachers responsible to the great Head of the Church? And, as long as the people have the use of this blessed book, they will have the means of comparing their whole ministry with the will of our Lord, and if they find it inconsistent with “the law and the testimony,” to confront the one by the light of the other. As this is the primary source of all power, it is to this that the ministers of religion are first of all responsible, and in a much higher sense than they can be to any merely human rules.

As the commission of their Saviour is their authority for preaching the gospel, so the doctrines and laws of his kingdom must be the primary rule of their ministry. Human exposition may give concentration to divine truth, but it can never alter or annul its authority. Having received this gospel to preach, and, when placed in the pastoral office, being obliged to administer and enforce the laws of Christ in the church, the minister is first of all responsible to his Lord and master. It may comport with the spirit of his commission to guard him against errors of doctrine, a hasty, precipitate and arbitrary administration of discipline; but no power on earth can have the right to prevent him preaching the gospel freely, and, in the way propounded in the New Testament, enforcing the laws of Christ. Infidelity on his part, or the assumption of a coercive controul on the part of the people, when either the doctrine or discipline of the New Testament are in question, is sin against the great Head of the Church. Both parties are under the same authority, and are equally amenable to Christ. It may be affirmed that this is quite beside the case. We think not. The question relates to the exercise of an irresponsible power, and our reply is—that ministers are first responsible to God; and as the people are in possession of his word, they have the means of judging whether they observe the rules and preach the doctrines of the gospel. The Word of God in the hands of the people is a check against the exercise of that arbitrary and irresponsible power which the Association declares, is exercised by the Methodist preachers in enforcing the rules of Scripture. Although, in every case offensive to persons falling under rebuke or expulsion from the Church, there is a full and explicit acknowledgement of the permanent and binding authority of the laws of Christ. It would, we apprehend, be much more agreeable to the feelings of a minister, to avoid this duty—to escape the burthen of being brought into collision with opposing parties, and to swim with the current, glide in what direction it may, rather than faithfully, and, in the midst of obloquy and reproach, firmly stand by the truth of God. To that truth, however, he owes allegiance—he is responsible to it, and the people possessing it themselves must be prepared to refuse submission to every thing of an anti-scriptural nature.

2. But, besides their accountability to the law of God, it so happens, that the Methodist Conference rests on the basis of a legal instrument enrolled in Chancery, and they are consequently responsible to its provisions. As this celebrated document is so often referred to in the debates now going on, and we presume it is not much known amongst the generality of our readers, we publish it entire.

“An Attested Copy of Mr. WESLEY'S Declaration and Establishment of the Conference of the people called Methodists, enrolled in His Majesty's High Court of Chancery:

“To all to whom these Presents shall come, John Wesley, late of Lincoln College, Oxford, but now of the City-road, London, Clerk, sendeth greeting:

"WHEREAS divers buildings, commonly called Chapels, with a messuage and dwelling-house, or other appurtenances, to each of the same belonging, situate in various parts of Great Britain, have been given and conveyed, from time to time, by the said John Wesley to certain persons and their heirs, in each of the said gifts and conveyances named; which are enrolled in his Majesty's High Court of Chancery, upon the acknowledgment of the said John Wesley, (pursuant to the Act of Parliament in that case made and provided,) upon trust, that the trustees in the said several deeds respectively named, and the survivors of them and their heirs and assigns, and the trustees for the time being, to be elected as in the said deeds is appointed, should permit and suffer the said John Wesley, and such other person and persons as he should for that purpose from time to time nominate and appoint, at all times during his life, at his will and pleasure to have and enjoy the free use and benefit of the said premises, that he the said John Wesley, and such person and persons as he should nominate and appoint, might therein, preach and expound God's holy word: And upon further trust, that the said respective trustees and the survivors of them, and their heirs and assigns, and the trustees for the time being, should permit and suffer Charles Wesley, brother of the said John Wesley, and such other person and persons as the said Charles Wesley should for that purpose from time to time nominate and appoint, in like manner during his life—To have, use, and enjoy the said premises respectively, for the like purposes as aforesaid: and after the decease of the survivor of them, the said John Wesley and Charles Wesley, then upon further trust, that the said respective trustees, and the survivors of them, and their heirs and assigns, and the trustees for the time being for ever, should permit and suffer such persons and for such time and times as should be appointed at the yearly Conference of the people called Methodists, in London, Bristol, or Leeds, and no others, to have and enjoy the said premises, for the purposes aforesaid: And whereas divers persons have, in like manner, given or conveyed many Chapels, with messuages and dwelling-houses, or other appurtenances to the same belonging, situate in various parts of Great Britain, and also in Ireland, to certain trustees, in each of the said gifts and conveyances respectively named upon the like trusts, and for the same uses and purposes as aforesaid, (except only that in some of the said gifts and conveyances, no life estate or other interest is therein or thereby given and reserved to the said Charles Wesley :) And whereas, for rendering effectual the trusts created by the said several gifts or conveyances, and that no doubt or litigation may arise with respect unto the same, or the interpretation and true meaning thereof, it has been thought expedient by the said John Wesley, on behalf of himself as donor of the several Chapels, with the messuages, dwelling-houses, or appurtenances before mentioned, as of the donors of the said other Chapels, with the messuages, dwelling-houses, or appurtenances to the same belonging, given or conveyed to the like uses and trusts, to explain the words, yearly Conference of the people called Methodists, contained in all the said trust deeds, and to declare what persons are members of the said Conference, and how the succession and identity thereof is to be continued: *Now therefore these presents witness*, that for accomplishing the aforesaid purposes, the said John Wesley doth hereby declare, that the Conference of the people called Methodists, in London, Bristol, or Leeds, ever since there hath been any yearly Conference of the said people called Methodists in any of the said places, hath always heretofore consisted of the Preachers and expounders of God's holy word, commonly called Methodist Preachers, in connexion with and under the care of the said John Wesley, whom he hath thought expedient year after year to summons to meet him, in one or other of the said places, of London, Bristol, or Leeds, to advise with them for the promotion of the gospel of Christ, to appoint the said persons so summoned, and the other Preachers and Expounders of God's holy word, also in connexion with, and under the care of the said John Wesley, not summoned to the said yearly Conference, to the use and enjoyment of the said Chapels and premises so given and conveyed upon trust for the said John Wesley, and such other person or persons as he should appoint during his life as aforesaid, and for the expulsion of unworthy and admission of new persons under his care and into his connexion, to be Preachers and Expounders as aforesaid, and also of other persons upon trial for the like purposes; the names of all which persons so summoned by the said John Wesley, the persons appointed with the Chapels and premises to which they were so appointed, together with the duration of such appointments, and of those expelled or admitted into connexion or upon trial, with all other matters transacted and done at the said yearly Conference, have, year by year, been printed and published under the title of Minutes of Conference. *And these presents further witness*, and the said John Wesley doth hereby avouch and further declare, that the several persons herein after named, to wit," &c., "being Preachers and Expounders of God's holy word, under the care and in connexion with the said John Wesley, have been, and now are, and do, on the day of the date hereof, constitute the members of the said Conference, according to the true intent and meaning of the said several gifts and conveyances wherein the words Conference of the People called Methodists are mentioned and contained. And that the said several persons before named, and their successors for ever, to be chosen as herein after mentioned, are, and shall for ever be construed, taken, and be, the Conference of the People called Methodists. Nevertheless, upon the terms, and subject to the regulations herein after prescribed, that is to say,

"1. That the Members of the said Conference, and their successors for the time being for ever shall assemble once in every year, at London, Bristol, or Leeds (except as after mentioned), for the purposes aforesaid; and the time and place of holding every subsequent Conference shall be appointed at the preceding one, save that the next Conference after the date hereof, shall be holden at Leeds, in Yorkshire, the last Tuesday in July next.

"2. The act of the majority in number of the Conference assembled as aforesaid, shall be had, taken, and be the act of the whole Conference, to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatsoever.

"3. That after the Conference shall be assembled as aforesaid, they shall first proceed to fill up all the vacancies occasioned by death or absence, as after mentioned.

"4. No act of the Conference assembled as aforesaid, shall be had, taken, or be the act of Conference, until forty of the members thereof are assembled, unless reduced under that number by death since the prior Conference, or absence as after mentioned; nor until the vacancies occasioned by death or absence, shall be filled up by the election of new members of the Conference, so as to make up the number one hundred, unless there be not a sufficient number of persons objects of such election; and during the assembly of the Conference, there shall always be forty members present at the doing of any act, save as aforesaid, or otherwise such act shall be void.

"5. The duration of the yearly assembly of the Conference shall not be less than five days, nor more than three weeks, and be concluded by the appointment of the Conference, if under twenty-one days; or otherwise the conclusion thereof shall follow of course at the end of the said twenty-one days; the whole of all which said time of the assembly of the Conference shall be had, taken, and considered, and be the yearly Conference of the people called Methodists; and all acts of the Conference, during such yearly assembly thereof, shall be the acts of the Conference, and none other.

"6. Immediately after all the vacancies occasioned by death or absence are filled up by the election of new members as aforesaid, the Conference shall choose a president and secretary of their assembly out of themselves, who shall continue such until the election of another president or secretary in the next, or other subsequent Conference; and the said president shall have the privilege and power of two members in all acts of the Conference during his presidency, and such other powers, privileges, and authorities, as the Conference shall from time to time see fit to entrust into his hands.

"7. Any member of the Conference absenting himself from the yearly assembly thereof for two years successively, without the consent or dispensation of the Conference, and be not present on the first day of the third yearly assembly thereof, at the time and place appointed for the holding of the same, shall cease to be a member of the Conference from and after the first day of the said third yearly assembly thereof, to all intents and purposes, as though he was naturally dead. But the Conference shall and may dispense with or consent to the absence of any member from any of the said yearly assemblies, for any cause which the Conference may see fit or necessary, and such member whose absence shall be so dispensed with or consented to by the Conference, shall not by such absence cease to be a member thereof.

"8. The Conference shall and may expel and put out from being a member thereof, or from being in connexion therewith, or from being upon trial, any person, member of the Conference, admitted into connexion, or upon trial, for any cause which the Conference may see fit or necessary; and every member of the Conference so expelled and put out, shall cease to be a member thereof, to all intents and purposes, as though he was naturally dead. And the Conference, immediately after the expulsion of any member thereof as aforesaid, shall elect another person to be a member of the Conference, in the stead of such member so expelled.

"9. The Conference shall and may admit into connexion with them, or upon trial, any person or persons whom they shall approve, to be Preachers and Expounders of God's holy word, under the care and direction of the Conference: the name of every such person or persons so admitted into connexion or upon trial as aforesaid, with the time and degrees of the admission, being entered in the Journals or Minutes of the Conference.

"10. No person shall be elected a member of the Conference who hath not been admitted in connexion with the Conference, as a Preacher and Expounder of God's holy word, as aforesaid, for twelve months.

"11. The Conference shall not, nor may, nominate or appoint any person to the use and enjoyment of, or to preach and expound God's holy word in, any of the Chapels and premises so given or conveyed, or which may be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, who is not either a member of the Conference, or admitted into connexion with the same, or upon trial, as aforesaid; nor appoint any person for more than three years successively, to the use and enjoyment of any Chapels and premises already given, or to be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, except ordained ministers of the Church of England.

"12. That the Conference shall and may appoint the place of holding the yearly assembly thereof, at any other city, town or place, than London, Bristol, or Leeds, when it shall seem expedient so to do.

"13. And for the convenience of the Chapels and premises already, or which may hereafter be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, situate in Ireland, or other parts out of the kingdom of Great Britain, the Conference shall and may, when and so often as it shall seem expedient; but not otherwise, appoint and delegate any member or members of the Conference with all or any of the powers, privileges and advantages, herein before contained or vested in the Conference; and all and every the acts, admissions, expulsions, and appointments whatsoever of such member or members of the Conference, so appointed and delegated as aforesaid, the same being put into writing, and signed by such delegate or delegates, and entered in the journal or minutes of the Conference, and subscribed as after mentioned, shall be deemed, taken, and be, the acts, admissions, expulsions, and appointments of the

Conference, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever, from the respective times when the same shall be done by such delegate or delegates: notwithstanding any thing herein contained to the contrary.

"14. All resolutions and orders touching elections, admissions, expulsions, consents, dispensations, delegations, or appointments and acts whatsoever of the Conference, shall be entered and written in the Journals or Minutes of the Conference, which shall be kept for that purpose, publicly read, and then subscribed by the President and Secretary thereof for the time being, during the time such Conference shall be assembled: and when so entered and subscribed, shall be had, taken received, and be, evidence of the said Conference, and of their said delegates, without the aid of any other proof; and whatever shall not be so entered and subscribed as aforesaid, shall not be had, taken, received, or be, the act of the Conference: and the said President and Secretary are hereby required and obliged to enter and subscribe, as aforesaid, every act whatever of the Conference.

"Lastly—Whenever the said Conference shall be reduced under the number of forty members, and continue so reduced for three yearly assemblies thereof successively, or whenever the members thereof shall decline or neglect to meet together annually for the purposes aforesaid, during the space of three years, that then, and in either of the said events, the Conference of the people called Methodists shall be extinguished, and all the aforesaid powers, privileges, and advantages shall cease, and the said Chapels and premises, and all other Chapels and premises, which now are, or hereafter may be settled given, or conveyed, upon the trusts aforesaid, shall vest in the trustees, for the time being of the said Chapels and premises respectively, and their successors for ever: UPON TRUST that they, and the survivors of them, and the trustees for the time being, do, shall, and may appoint such person and persons to preach and expound God's holy word therein, and to have the use and enjoyment thereof, for such time, and in such manner, as to them shall seem proper."

2. Some responsibility, it will appear, arises out of this instrument, and evidently a responsibility affecting the very existence of Methodism. The identity of Conference—the persons of whom it shall for ever consist—their title to appoint preachers to the chapels—the manner of their proceedings—the duration of their sittings—the binding nature of their majorities—the record of their deliberations—the offices and powers to be created—and the conditions of its extinction, are all subjects of legal enactment.—In this view the Conference is not a voluntary association of ministers; who, being bound by no previously existing laws, are at perfect liberty to act as they please; but of the nature of a *chartered* body united and bound by the laws and regulations of the institution. The ramifications of this instrument extend to almost every thing affecting the interests and even existence of Methodism. The security of chapel property—the doctrines taught in our pulpits—the general rules and discipline for the government of the preachers—and the identity and even existence of the body as "united societies."

Destroy the legal constitution of the Conference, and you remove the key-stone from the arch, and the whole structure of Methodism must fall. Then, when it is affirmed that the Conference is an irresponsible body, the reply is—that it exists on the basis of law—that its members are answerable to these rules—that their violation would annul its existence—and that, of consequence, it is, in the highest sense possible, a responsible body. These responsibilities may not be of a nature to meet the taste of our reformers; for we all know what they mean—it is responsibility to themselves.

3. But in its legislative capacity the Conference is not irresponsible. In the Leeds Regulations is the following respecting new rules—Minutes, vol. 1, 376:—

"It is determined, that if at any time the Conference see it necessary to make any new rule for the Societies at large, and such rule should be objected to at the first quarterly meeting in any given circuit; and if the major part of that meeting, in conjunction with the preachers, be of opinion, that the enforcing of such rule in that circuit will be injurious to the prosperity of that circuit; it shall not be enforced in opposition to the judgment of such quarterly meeting, before the second Conference. But, if the rule be confirmed by the second Conference, it shall be binding to the whole connexion. Nevertheless, the quarterly meetings, rejecting a new rule, shall not, by publications, public meetings, or otherwise, make that rule a cause of dissention; but shall strive, by every means, to preserve the peace of the connexion."

We never heard the binding nature of this rule brought into question. We know that Dr. Warren, and, under his guidance, the Grand Central Association, have charged the Conference with disregarding it in the case of the Theological Institution. The question is—whether that Institution falls under the proper meaning of the rule. The rule itself is—"It is determined that if at any time the Conference see it necessary to make any new rule for the societies at large, and such rule should be objected to at the first quarterly meeting," &c. We ask whether the establishment of the Theological Institution for the improvement of the junior preachers, is a rule for the societies at large? Is it proposed to send the societies at large to this obnoxious School? Then it would be a rule for them. But as no such thing is in contemplation, these societies

are perfectly free from the tyranny of this rule so far. Is it proposed to support this Institution by a new rule of finance, demanding from the *societies at large* a tax for that purpose? No such impost is laid either on the societies or any other person. If this had been done, and an expression of opinion on the part of the Quarterly Meetings denied, then the rule would have been broken. But, as it is, the societies at large are perfectly free from the tyranny of taxation without representation, for the Institution is to be supported by the voluntary contributions of those who are favourable to its objects. It might with as much candour and truth be said that the rule directing the chairmen of districts to require a list of the books read by young men on trial, together with examinations and advice respecting the best and most useful modes of study, was as much a rule for the societies at large as this latter. Nothing but the most tortuous special pleading could possibly press this case into a breach of the above law. When elected to the office of a travelling preacher by the Quarterly Meetings, the direction of his studies and his guidance in the ministerial work have been in the hands of his brethren, and what is the new institution but an enlargement of the same principle? The dispute on this question can deceive no one; it is evidently only a part of a grand and united plan to bring down the ministerial office; and, instead of leaving it to prosecute its useful and holy purposes, free and unfettered, to place it, as the late lamented Mr. Watson remarked, "in commission."

But to return to the question of legislative responsibility. We hold decidedly, that a religious community ought to assent to the laws and discipline under which they place themselves. As obedience is a question of conscience, they cannot be bound without their own consent; they cannot consent, except the rules which they are expected to regard, are presented for their consideration. Hence it is most reasonable that any new rule binding on the societies at large, should be presented to some competent tribunal: the Quarterly Meetings are considered so in our legislation, and in the case specified, it is law that they should, if they think proper, act according to the above regulation. Happily for the peace and stability of the connexion, the rules of the societies have been fixed from the beginning. The Conference has neither added to, nor deducted from, this excellent and scriptural code, and, we are persuaded, are under no temptation to do so. Legislation, since then, has been limited to some minor economical arrangements; and, as long as the body remains in its present state, it is not likely to go beyond this. The societies have ever reposed in a state of perfect peace and liberty, except when disturbed by designing agitators. No new yoke has been placed upon them, and though great changes have taken place in the state of society and the value of money, even the penny-a-week and shilling-a-quarter system still remains untouched.

Then we hold, on the ground of the above regulation, that the Conference is responsible to the societies, through the Quarterly Meetings, for any new rule to be binding on them on the principle that they are the parties intended. But it is obvious that other interests may be made matter of regulation as well. The body of trustees, local preachers, leaders, travelling preachers, and the great missionary department, have duties, interests, and privileges distinct, as officers, from the societies at large.—Any one of these offices and interests may be made subject to regulation; experience may shew the necessity of something additional; or new exigencies may arise in the state of the church or of the world to require some change, and will it follow that the Conference has violated the above rule? The establishment of the Theological Institution is in point. The legislation related solely to one point—the improvement of the preachers in Theological knowledge. The societies and congregations, it is true, will be affected by it, viz.—by enjoying, we trust, a much more clear and efficient ministry.

4. In the circuits the preachers are responsible, as they are under laws, on account of their morals, doctrines, and observance of the rules propounded by the Plan of Pacification, and a mixed court, consisting of preachers, trustees, stewards, and leaders, is constituted, to which they are answerable.—[See Plan of Pacification, Minutes, vol. 1, 323.]

"Nevertheless, if the majority of the Trustees, or the majority of the Stewards and Leaders of any society, believe that any Preacher appointed for their Circuit, is immoral, erroneous in doctrines, deficient in abilities, or that he has broken any of the rules above-mentioned, they shall have authority to summon the Preachers of the district, and all the Trustees, Stewards, and Leaders of the Circuit to meet in their Chapel on a day and hour appointed (sufficient time being given). The Chairman of the District shall be President of the assembly: and every Preacher, Trustee, Steward, and Leader, shall have a single vote, the chairman possessing also the casting voice. And if the majority of the meeting judge that the accused Preacher is immoral, erroneous in doctrines, deficient in abilities, or has broken any of the rules above-mentioned, he shall be considered as removed from that Circuit:

and the District Committee shall, as soon as possible, appoint another Preacher for that Circuit instead of the Preacher so removed: and shall determine among themselves how the removed Preacher shall be disposed of till the Conference, and shall have authority to suspend the said Preacher from all public duties, till the Conference, if they judge proper. The District Committee shall also supply, as well as possible, the place of the removed Preacher, till another Preacher be appointed. And the Preacher thus appointed, and all other Preachers, shall be subject to the above mode of trial. And if the District Committee do not appoint a Preacher for that Circuit, instead of the removed Preacher, within a month after the aforesaid removal, or do not fill up the place of the removed Preacher, till another Preacher be appointed, the majority of the said Trustees, Stewards, and Leaders, being again regularly summoned, shall appoint a Preacher for the said Circuit, provided he be a member of the Methodist Connexion, till the ensuing Conference."

Here is responsibility on the only points on which a minister can be held accountable, except it should suit the taste of the Association to place them under restraint, on questions not falling under the heads of morals, ability for their work, doctrinal purity and fidelity, and observance of the rules. It is strange, if the preachers have so glaringly violated the rules of the connexion in the late transactions in Liverpool and other places, that the aggrieved parties have not sought redress by an appeal to a District Meeting, constituted as above. If we recollect right, on the first trials which took place at Leeds-street, the superintendent challenged Mr. Rowland and his companions to such a trial. This was met by some scurrilous epithets respecting a trial by such men as himself, when, in fact, Mr. Rowland must have known that an appeal to such a tribunal would be an appeal to a mixed court, consisting, most likely, of a numerical majority of laymen.

To render this responsibility doubly binding, the four subjects contained in the Plan of Pacification are usually made a prominent part of the settlement of the chapels, and have consequently all the force of a legal provision. The preachers are, no doubt, bound by the Chapel Deeds to a strict observance of the duties of their office, and these guardians of our economy as well as of doctrinal purity, can appeal to the courts for the protection of law in cases of malversation. On this principle Dr. Warren, and the trustees who favour his cause, have appealed to a court of equity, and the admissibility of their plea disproves most fully the hacknied assertion that the preachers are irresponsible. However this trial may terminate, it goes to shew the responsibility of the position in which, not only individual preachers, but some of our local jurisdictions are placed.

5. Besides the particulars already noticed, the subject of funds is often introduced to shew that the preachers are irresponsible on this as on other questions. We are told again and again, that the people ought to have a share in the management of the temporal business of the connexion, implying that the preachers take the whole burthen of this on themselves. How stands this question, for instance, in the circuits? Does not the management of the circuit funds rest in the hands of the stewards, subject to the controul of the meetings? Have the preachers any concern in this except in making the collections; which, as soon as done, are handed over to the proper treasurers or stewards, and never come into their hands at all, till one of these officers pay them their regularly appointed stipend. In a very clear statement of the manner in which the general funds of the body are disposed of, and the management of the several institutions, Mr. VEVERS remarks—

"Let any man examine for himself the Minutes of Conference (I appeal to a published document), and he will find that on the four Committees just mentioned, who have the charge of the Missions, Chapel fund, Loan fund and School fund, there are *one hundred and seven Lay Gentlemen*, who for true Christian independence, liberality, piety, and personal honor, are entitled to the gratitude and confidence of our societies, and of the Conference. And if to these Gentlemen we add the Circuit Stewards throughout the connexion, to whom is entrusted at the District Meetings, in conjunction with the Preachers, the appropriation of the Contingent Fund; as there are three hundred and sixty-nine Circuits in Great Britain, and forty-two in Ireland, each of which has two Stewards, there are eight hundred and twenty-two Stewards, making an aggregate of *nine hundred and twenty-nine Laymen*, who are actually entrusted with this charge, in conjunction with the Preachers, who at the last Conference, excluding Missionaries, Superannuated Preachers, and Supernumeraries, in the aggregate amounted to *eight hundred and eighty-four*,—leaving an actual majority of Laymen to the number of *forty-five*!

"This is not a fictitious, but a plain unvarnished statement of matter of fact: it is grounded upon a published document, to which every man in the kingdom may have access. I appeal to every member of the "United Association" for its truth; and I solicit refutation if I give utterance to a falsehood. What becomes then of the false or disingenuous statements which are published with such professions of piety! and credited apparently with such unholy delight! that the Funds are under the controul (conveying the idea of *sole controul*!) of the Conference? Would not the men who

deliberately publish such statements, avowedly with the design of lessening the pastoral influence of the Preachers, and alienating from them the affections of their flocks, and thus fixing between them a deep and impassable gulf, blush, if capable of shame?

"The admission of Laymen to a share in the management of the Funds, constituting, as they do in the aggregate, a positive majority, are, the "innovations" of modern Methodism! the "innovations" which the "United Association," either ignorantly or designedly, actually reprobate! If I may, without subjecting myself to the imputation of vanity, or levity, be allowed to borrow from a book, the quotations from which ought always to be made with reverence, I would say,—without any disrespect to the members of the "United Association,"—The provisions made by the Methodist Conference for the power of Laymen to assist in the management of its funds, of which ye are so palpably ignorant, "these we declare unto you."

What then becomes of Mr. Gordon's false and slanderous insinuation—"They have the interest of honour, and they have the interest which the money gives them (hear, hear). All the honour is confined to them—all the money directly or indirectly comes into their pockets (laughter and cheers)." We have nothing to do with the honour referred to just now, but we ask the honourable and candid men who form the committees of our several funds, whether any of the connexion's money, "directly or indirectly," comes into the pockets of the Methodist preachers, except their salaries? The impression intended to be made on the minds of our people by this appeal to their passions, is evidently, that the noble sums contributed, are not for the public good—the extension of the gospel—and the salvation of the destitute, but for the aggrandisement of the preachers. No doubt it will succeed to some extent. Many of our people do not give themselves the trouble to examine into the manner in which their contributions are disposed of; but those who are acquainted with the nature of our system, know that hundreds of poor villages in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, are now blessed with religious ordinances, supplied from these funds; whilst the friends of missions can point to noble establishments in the four quarters of the globe, now rising up as the incipient nurseries of Christianity, to ignorant and ruined millions of the human race; or standing in moral majesty to attest the glories of the cross;—all, the fruits of those charities, prayers and toils, which the connexion have consecrated to this glorious cause. And this faction can have the heartlessness, in order to fix a stigma on the ministers of religion, to insinuate that they are the only persons benefited by these exertions. They would expose the souls of their own poor and benighted countrymen, as well as the heathen world, to the perils attendant on being destitute of the gospel, to gratify their revenge against a class of men who happen to be the objects of their hate. Can satanical malevolence go beyond this?

6. Then, in the face of all these facts, what can the sophism respecting the "*irresponsible, absolute, and arbitrary*" power of the preachers mean, except, that it is an office which is not conferred at the hustings, and renewable at the will of the constituency conferring it. That this is the notion of irresponsibility on the part of the Association, is evident from other parts of Mr. Gordon's speech: "I know of no inherent rights of the preachers of the Gospel. They are given by the people; how can they be otherwise? The people choose a man as their minister." Again—"What the people give, they can control; and what they can control, they can take away." And—"There are no rights but what you give." This is a plain exposition of Mr. Gordon's notions of responsibility. Our space will not allow us to enter fully into this question at present; but we take leave to ask Mr. Gordon whether, when he took upon him the ministerial office, that office was conferred by the suffrages and votes of any body of men whatever. Supposing his position true, that the people have a right to choose their own minister—does not that choice pre-suppose his previous ministerial existence? Does it not imply moral fitness, spiritual gifts, the call to the office by the great Head of the Church, and consequently "*a trust*" from him, with all the rights and responsibilities of the gospel? If this is admitted—and it will be by all sober Christians, of every party—then it will follow that the ministerial office itself is not elective, and that there are rights inherent in the office. The discharge of the functions of the ministry amongst a people, may be made a subject of economical arrangement, but this arrangement does not confer the office, and it has no scriptural right to obstruct its full and unembarrassed discharge. Independent churches claim the right of electing their own ministers, but they neither claim the power of conferring the office nor of depriving a person of its functions. Their claim is limited to two points: his election to the pastoral duties amongst themselves, and his dismissal from that relationship to their particular church. If he consider himself *entrusted* with a "dispensation of the gospel," by the great Lord of the harvest, when he cannot discharge his duties in one part of the field, he goes to another.

The doctrine held by our reformers goes many degrees beyond this: it asserts that the

ministry has "*no inherent rights*"—that there are no rights but such as are given by the people; consequently, the office is of human institution—it is altogether elective, and a man pretending to preach the gospel without the suffrages of the people, is an usurper.—Then we ask the Association, if this principle be true, on what ground they found their claim to hold what principles they please, and also, to propagate them in a *viva voce* manner? Do they not assume to themselves the rights of conscience and private judgment? Do they not tell us in loud and long speeches, as well as in *Lantern* light essays, that these are inherent and not delegated rights? If their conscience and judgment told them it was their duty to preach the gospel, would they not consider themselves free to do so, and that any power which would prevent it was anti-Christian? This is their principle: they claim the power to give the right to preach the gospel—to control, and to take away. This is the liberty they arrogate to themselves! these are the chains they are attempting to forge for the ministers they so DEARLY LOVE! There are more kinds of popery than that which is seated on the seven-hilled city, or that which has been contrived and is exercised by the Methodist Conference. Despotism is not less real because it is the despotism of the multitude; and certainly no principle was ever a greater outrage against the noble safeguards of British law, or the rights of private judgment—to say nothing of the grand charter of Scriptural privilege—than the one avowed at the Music Hall, amongst these sons of freedom. We thank them for all such avowals; they are valuable to us: they teach our preachers what is preparing for them, and if we cannot succeed in enabling them to escape these fetters, we may, at least, warn them to submit to the ignominy of their fate with patient resignation. But whilst we do so, we take the liberty to tell them that there are interests at stake more valuable and important than their quiet and peaceable passage to the grave—even if by concession they could smooth that path; they are the rights of conscience—freedom of speech—the integrity of Methodism—fidelity to Christ, who has put them into the ministry—and a firm and inflexible adherence to the principles of the Bible;—all of which this one bold assumption of the Association most daringly assaults.

TRIAL AND CONDEMNATION OF THE "*ILLUMINATOR*," AT DUDLEY.

The third number of our little publication having found its way to Dudley, has shared the fate of Bunyan's Pilgrim, in Vanity fair. As the people there were called reformers, it was supposed they were favourable to liberty of speech, and a free press; and so the *Illuminator* ventured to say, that, for a man's conscience to quarrel with the Methodist ministry, because it was friendly to the established church, while at the same time he was quite reconciled to the doings of a dram shop, was to "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." They gave it "audience unto this word," and then lifted up their voice through the length and breadth of the Dudley circuit, exclaiming, "away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live." Not satisfied with the martyrdom of a whole sheet of paper, they demand satisfaction from us, as aiders, abettors, and accomplices. The prescribed penance for our great sin, is, that we are "requested," by Mr. G. England, to give the enclosed document a place in the next *Illuminator*;" which we accordingly proceed to perform with all suitable sentiments:—

"At a regular Leaders' meeting, held on Monday evening, February 16, in the vestry of King-street Chapel, Dudley, the Rev. B. Frankland in the Chair, the subject of a slanderous paragraph, contained in the third number of the *Illuminator*, reflecting on the personal and family character of Alexander Gordon, Esq., was brought before the meeting, when it was resolved:—

"That this meeting views with painful disgust, the wicked attempt made by certain parties, to slander and traduce the personal and family character of our highly esteemed, and sincerely venerated friend and brother, Mr. Alexander Gordon, as the same is contained in a paragraph* of a pamphlet, called the *Illuminator*; published at

* See *Illuminator*, p. 39.

Liverpool, on the 4th instant, and circulated by the Methodist travelling preachers.

"That Mr. Gordon has, for nearly forty years, sustained the office of local preacher, and for a long period, and up to the present time, that of class leader,—is a trustee to a number of our chapels, and district treasurer to the children's fund :—has for a long series of years, been a most liberal supporter of Methodism in all its institutions, as well as the cause of religion generally :—has always manifested the utmost kindness and respect for the Wesleyan ministers, his house having been uniformly open, and his table spread for them, as numbers, and many of them of the highest order, must testify ; and that for nearly forty years that he has lived in this town, he has maintained the most unspotted and unimpeachable character, and experienced the warmest affection and respect from all who have known him.

"That, in conducting his business as a wholesale and retail wine and spirit merchant, Mr. Gordon has uniformly observed the greatest degree of prudence ; no species of ill language or drunkenness having been permitted, nor any allowed to sit down to drink in his shop.

"That Mr. Gordon's family, chiefly under the care of their lately deceased, deeply lamented, and truly judicious and pious mother, has been brought up in the most exemplary and respectable manner, as its members fully manifest.

"That we, therefore, feel ourselves called upon, by every claim of Christian affection and duty, to repudiate, with the utmost indignation, the vile insinuations contained in the paragraph referred to (and which are too gross for repetition), as not only utterly false and groundless, but most atrociously slanderous and malignant ; and we cordially and heartily tender to him, and his injured family, our most affectionate sympathies, and the fullest assurance of our unshaken esteem and regard.

"Signed by 14 officers in the town Society, and 85 in the Circuit."

These resolutions about the respectability of this squire's establishment might have been spared, for as our correspondent regards *all* dram shops as the "abomination which maketh desolate," he never dreamt for a moment of settling the proportion of iniquity between them. What the Dudley leaders mean, by "vile insinuations which are "too gross for repetition," is best known to themselves. That the sentiments to which utterance is given are those entertained by our venerable founder, respecting such houses in general, we quote his words, and even deem it right to give the entire paragraph, from which the thoughts and some of the expressions are selected.*

It has been said, the Methodist Conference by expressing a friendly feeling to the established church, has rendered itself a

* "Therefore, we may not sell any thing which tends to impair health. Such is, eminently, all that liquid fire commonly called drams, or spirituous liquors. It is true they may have a place in medicine ; they may be of use in some bodily disorders ; although there would rarely be occasion for them were it not for the unskilfulness of the practitioner. Therefore, such as prepare and sell them only for this end may keep their conscience clear. But who are they who prepare them only for this end ? Do you know ten such distillers in England ? Then excuse these. But all who sell them in the common way, to any that will buy, are poisoners general. They murder his majesty's subjects by wholesale, neither does their eye pity nor spare ; they drive them to hell like sheep. And what is their gain ? Is it not the blood of these men ? Who then would envy their large estates and sumptuous palaces ? A curse is in the midst of them ; the curse of God cleaves to the stones, the timber, the furniture of them ! The curse of God is in their gardens, their walks, their groves ; a fire that burns to the nethermost hell ! Blood—blood is there : the foundation, the floor, the walls, the roof are stained with blood ! And canst thou hope—O thou man of blood !—though thou art "clothed in scarlet and fine linen, and farest sumptuously every day :—" canst thou hope to deliver down thy *fields of blood* to the third generation ? Not so : for there is a God in heaven.—Therefore, thy name shall soon be rooted out. Like as those whom thou hast destroyed body and soul, "thy memorial shall perish with thee."—*Wesley's Works*, vol. 6, p. 128, Edition, 1829.

political club. What the Dudley leaders' meeting has become by all its sweet expressions of friendliness to an "establishment" of another kind, we shall not presume to say. Much has been said against the connexion between church and state, but the "connexion" of a dram shop with Methodism, is a first rate device of the devil, for by this it becomes, not merely a "respectable," but quite an ecclesiastical affair; so that if any "conscience" should be disturbed by the terrible words of Mr. Wesley, it may be hushed to rest by remembering the patronage of the leaders' meeting. It is said the Rev. B. Frankland was in the chair: had it been John Wesley, he might have recollected his own sermon, and perhaps refused to "put the motion," which must have ruined his credit with the Association.

Whether Mr. Wesley's words, like ours, will be considered "atrociously slanderous and malignant," we know not; but some *modest* dram-sellers have felt their force, and withdrawn from the society, and how others contrive to endure them, has long been matter of just astonishment. But some people will be Methodists in spite of every thing. The members of the Association in Liverpool, at this moment, are making the country ring with accounts of the crying wrongs they have received from the travelling preachers. Yet, for purposes of faction, they persist in hearing the words of eternal life, from lips which, they say, have long been accustomed to deceive. They literally fight their way to the Lord's table, to receive the Sacrament from hands, which, they say, are defiled with injustice. They *will have* tickets in token of their christian brotherhood and communion, with these "cruel" and "despotic" men; and to complete this "ineffable hypocrisy," after directing a preacher, by a formal motion, to "leave the chair," they publicly complain of the great injury he has done them, by quietly leaving them to their own courses. Wholesale dealers in hypocrisy and "blood," may be "born to set the Conference right," for any thing we know; but St. James has certainly directed their attention in the first place, to something a little nearer home. "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded," and we mean to continue to second and support his motion, though in so doing, we may again incur the "utmost indignation" of the men of Dudley.

Correspondence.

NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN.

Sir,—Solomon said, "there is nothing new under the sun," and although some people may imagine the wise man was mistaken in that assertion, nevertheless with respect to the present faction in Liverpool, it is literally correct! Let any person who heard or read the addresses delivered at the Music Hall, by the so denominated *eloquent* men, judge. One of whom, viz.—the writer of the Catechism (and I suppose he does not mean to exclude himself),

says—"some men are singularly fitted for great actions. Superior to discouragement, they press through difficulties, which to others appear to be insurmountable, and no more regard opposition, than does the stately bark the opposing billows of the ocean; nor reproach, than the noisy spray, or the foaming waves, which occasionally break upon her bows, as she rides contemptuously through them." But really in admiring the magniloquence of this man, I find I am in danger of losing sight of the sentiment of the Israelitish monarch, and the proofs to which I would call your attention, as applicable to the present faction, are the following: which I have copied, *verbatim*, from the Minutes of Conference, published thirty-eight years ago:

"Various unkind reflections having been thrown out in certain publications, concerning such of the senior preachers as are said to direct and manage our connexion, as if they were tyrants and oppressors: We, whose names are underwritten, think it our duty to repel such reflections, by declaring, that instead of considering our senior brethren in the light of 'tyrants and oppressors,' we feel ourselves under great obligations to them, for their extraordinary labour and fatigue in the service of the Conference. We are satisfied that their piety, abilities, faithfulness, diligence, usefulness, and long continuance in the work of the ministry, entitle them to the respect and esteem of the whole connexion."

This declaration was signed by upwards of ninety preachers. The fathers to whom it refers are all gone to glory; together with the greater part of those who signed it: a few are yet living, who are now the senior members of the Conference. It will, therefore, be observed how the above quotation applies expressly to the false representations made by the existing faction, as to the dominant party in the Conference at the present time.

The following quotation also from the Minutes of the same year, which I give, is also deeply interesting; and let any person who knows the heads of the faction in Liverpool, only think of the men, together with their conduct, and they will see a more accurate description of the agitators could not have been given, if the writer had been now living, and those gentlemen had sat before him.

"Some have arisen who, under the pretence of liberty (but in reality making it a cloak for licentiousness,) and from the desire of being the heads of a party, endeavour to overturn our itinerancy and discipline, and to destroy them, root and branch. We may truly, in the proper, spiritual sense, apply those words of the Apostle to them: 'They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us, but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.' However, they have been too successful in drawing disciples after them; and though they have been sowing the seeds of discord for two years past, their plan has been but just brought to maturity, and they are now exerting themselves to the utmost of their powers, to scatter and destroy the flock. But we have a full confidence, that the great Governor of the Church is on our side; and if so, 'who can be against us?'"

Such is the language of those venerable men who, thirty-eight years ago, had to bear the very same reproach as the preachers of the present time. They were represented as proud and haughty; as oppressors and tyrants; as mercenary and covetous. They had not only to bear the scoffs and reproaches of the world, but their characters were traduced by members of their own society, under the pretence of being friends of liberty and of the people.

How exact, therefore, is the parallel: well might Solomon say, "there is nothing new under the sun"! As their fathers were treated, so are their sons in the gospel. It is well known that the members of the present faction have not only delivered their slander in the Music Hall and from the press, but have actually employed agents to go from house to house to poison the minds of certain individuals; and they have also sent these servitors to small, country societies, to ascertain how far they might succeed in corrupting the hearts and minds of the pious Methodists there. Now, whenever a person under the mask of zeal for God, and the reformation of the church, is found willing to be employed in dividing a Christian society and scattering the flock, he will assuredly have plenty of work; and thus become a humble imitator of the renowned Barlow, of Manchester, who gained a *blessed* and *glorious victory*, in breaking up a peaceable meeting, held for the purpose of sending the gospel to the heathen world. This unhallowed exploit was industriously placarded by himself, or friends, on the walls of the houses in Manchester!

As the determination of the faction is to revolutionize Methodism, if it can be accomplished, the question is, are they likely to prevail? Solomon says, "there is nothing new under the sun;" we may, therefore, legitimately enquire, respecting the fate of a similar faction which prevailed thirty-eight years ago—"Did the Conference then yield to threats? No. Were delegates admitted as part and parcel of the Conference? No. Were the supplies cut off, so as to force the men of God to betray their trust to popular clamour? No. Did the faction draw off many people? Yes; about five thousand of the members of the society. Were not the preachers terrified into submission? No. Did the Lord forsake the preachers and the Conference? No. How long was it before the number of members became equal to that of the society before the division? Not quite one year! Has Methodism prospered since that period? Yes; and never more than it has during the last four or five years. But the faction now say the preachers are tyrants; so said the former. They say they are fallen; so said the former. They say the people are, generally, with the faction; so said the former. They threaten the Conference; so did the former! But will not the Conference be terrified? The former was not. Will they not be forced into submission? The former was not. Will not the loss of members be great? Probably not, when the dissentients numbered before, one-twentieth of the body; and if it be, in one year, the Lord can again fill up the ranks?

Then, what have the Methodists to fear? Nothing—if they firmly maintain their doctrines, constitution, and discipline. The republican faction may for a short time delude others, as well as themselves—and they may think that they are "singularly fitted for great actions," and to be glorious reformers: but the wisdom of Wesley, Mather, Pawson, Benson, Bradburn, Thompson, Tay-

lor, Clarke, and Watson will not be much improved by that of Rowland, Farrer, Barnes, Morgan, and Stubbs!

That the faction will utterly fail, I have no doubt. When Mr. Wesley saw, and rejoiced in the continued progress and prosperity of Methodism, he remarked—that some other sects commenced by reforming those from whom they separated, but that the Methodists began with reforming themselves.—I have known Methodism for some years, but never did I witness so much slander and lying against the preachers. They might suddenly have become the vilest men upon earth; they might not only be destitute of piety, but be common liars, cheats, pocketing the money of the public, &c. Were it necessary, I would give you some awful instances of the above slanders, with the very expressions which were used by persons who are thus unhappily employed. When they have been detected in direct falsehoods, or vilifying the characters of their preachers, they have felt a little abashed or confounded; but have tried to evade the direct force, and have remarked—“Oh! I did not mean it so, and it was only among a few friends, BUT DO NOT TELL IT AGAIN FOR THE WORLD!!”

Such a foundation cannot stand, and it will be far better, both for the peace and prosperity of the societies in Manchester and Liverpool, to have a cleansing from such characters; and the Lord will then graciously return and visit his inheritance.

A LOVER OF METHODISM.

THE LATE MEETING AT THE TABERNACLE, HULL.

“Sir—I transmit you, in addition to the report contained in your last paper, the following particulars connected with the public meeting held at the tabernacle, in Sykes-street, on Wednesday the 11th instant. With some of them you could not at that time be acquainted, yet the knowledge of each is essentially necessary to a right understanding of the whole affair.

“As the Wesleyan Methodists were especially invited to this meeting by public advertisement, and had been previously led by the chairman to expect that discussion would be allowed, two of their ministers and a number of the respectable members of the society went, fully prepared to give a triumphant refutation to the hacknied misrepresentations and falsehoods of Dr. Warren, and his adherents.

“On arriving at the doors, however, they discovered that the ministers would not be allowed to enter without showing a society ticket, though every Methodist ought to know that the ministers have no ticket; yet, by their own members were our ministers repulsed, and, in both instances, by police authority too. To the honour of the police officers, however, it ought to be mentioned, that they voluntarily withdrew their authority before the resisting members did. I forbear to particularize the disgraceful treatment which one of them received from a member, after the police officer had allowed him to pass. Such strictness with the preachers would have led one to expect, that none but Wesleyans would be found within the chapel; so far, however, from this being the fact, a large number of individuals who have no connection with our society, had been admitted privately, long before the front doors were opened. Soon the show of tickets became a mere farce, and there is reason to believe, that no persons were denied entrance to that meeting but the two Wesleyan ministers, or their recognised friends! It is, sir, my decided conviction, that a majority of at least five to one of the individuals then present were not Wesleyan Methodists.

“On their admission, one of the preachers, followed by some friends, immediately proceeded towards the platform, and requested permission to take their seats upon it; but this was also positively refused—and then, too, for the first time, they were told that no discussion would be allowed. No other course was now left them but to seat themselves where they could, and be content with expressing their dissent from every incorrect state-

ment by "No, no;" or some other equally significant expression. The first instance of this kind occurred when, in the chairman's opening speech, he attempted to justify their proceedings, by asserting that they had been denied the legal or Methodist mode of expressing their sentiments. With what reason, sir, this assertion was denied, I leave you and the public to decide, when you have read the following reply of our superintendent, Mr. Clegg, to Messrs. Cookman and Gleadow—the substance of which, and that of the resolutions also, he stated in the December quarterly meeting.

"Hull, December 9th, 1834.

"Dear Brethren—Having attentively read the resolutions which you communicated to me on Friday, and which you wish to pass our quarterly meeting to-day, and having consulted with my colleagues and with several intelligent friends, I now write respectfully to express my hope and desire that you will not attempt to introduce them:—

"1st—Because I am not convinced that I can, constitutionally, put them to the meeting.

"2ndly—Were I entirely satisfied that I could, consistently, propose them to the meeting; I have many doubts that any good would result from a discussion of them at the present time, though I firmly believe they would be rejected.

"3rdly—Because there is no necessity to introduce them now, in order to present them either to the district meeting or the Conference.

"4thly—Because, should I be persuaded before March or June, that I can, consistently, put them to a quarterly meeting, I shall readily gratify you.

"5thly—Because, should I not be able to meet your wishes, you are aware you have the right of appeal to the district meeting and the Conference, to which assemblies you can express your opinions and desires, which, I have no doubt will be treated with proper attention.

"With these views and sentiments upon the subject of your application, and with the hope they will be satisfactory—I remain, dear brethren, yours affectionately,

WILLIAM CLEGG.

"To Messrs Cookman and Gleadow."

A statement, then, so wide of the truth, as that uttered by the chairman, did not fail to call forth a prompt, "No, no," from every unprejudiced and correctly informed Wesleyan present; but no sooner had the denial been expressed than they were taught by the most indecent uproar, and shouts of "Down with them," "Turn them out," &c., &c., that even this small liberty was not to be allowed, but that, however false the assumption, or vile the calumny cast upon their ministers, they were expected silently to acquiesce; or, if they dared indignantly to say "No!" they were to be ordered into the custody of the police officers in attendance. Your readers and the Methodist society will hence judge how mild and tolerant would be the government of such reformers if they were to bear rule. Their violent and coarse scurrility is proof enough, to every candid mind, that if they have felt the lash of discipline, it has not been for a trifle. Much was said by the speakers on the violation of law by the preachers, and yet those very laws to which the men appealed (the laws of 1795 and 1797), gave power to superintendents to expel members or official men for disturbing the peace of the society, when their crime had been proved at the official meetings. Mr. Rowland himself has owned "that he had broken the law, and that he gloried in it"—his crime was proved at the proper leaders' meeting; but, because a majority of the members present (who were his accomplices) thought that disturbing the peace of the society was a mere trifle, they, before the evidence of his guilt was adduced, declared the charge to be frivolous and vexatious, and ere the meeting broke up, voted their superintendent out of the chair.

"Take the case, too, of Dr. Warren. How was it that he never objected to the mode of his trial till after it had taken place? Why did he appear at all before his brethren if he considered the meeting illegally constituted; and when he withdrew, after the trial had proceeded some time, how was it that he even then made no objection to the constitution of the meeting? Nay, how could he tell them, when they informed him that they would have no alternative left but suspension, if he refused to take his trial, "that he was fully aware that they must proceed in the usual way—that he believed they would do their duty in the fear of God; and that he would abide by their decision?" These, sir, and many other similar questions, we could put on Dr. Warren's case, that neither he nor his friends dare to meet in the eye of Christian integrity or Methodist law. He did not even attempt to answer Mr. M'Owan's question, "by what law or usage in Methodism," &c; and what, sir, can you or the public think of his conduct as a minister of the Gospel in introducing that letter of Mr. Wesley's (which, after all, contains nothing against an "Institution" for the education of our junior preachers), as "an original letter came to light within the last four days," when this very same letter has been before the public for several years—in the 13th volume of the last edition of Wesley's works, p. 58; and this done too by the man, the only man, in the Conference who contended for calling the Institution a college, and who now professes to hold it in high contempt—because, forsooth, he thinks it so *resembles a school*! What, sir, must the Christian public think of this same Reverend Doctor, when they read that,

at the Tabernacle meeting, he, to his everlasting shame, confessed that, on a recent occasion, he so far forgot his Christian principles as to vote for the suspension from his ministerial functions of a brother minister from a sinful expediency! If he could thus deliberately act on so solemn an occasion, surely we have a right to conclude that, in order to accomplish his own ambitious purposes, any other measures he may think proper to adopt, however revolting and anti-christian, will be set down by him to the account of the same astounding principle.

What, too, sir, are we to think of the few persons in this town who, while our large society was in peace and prosperity, and not even the shadow of a grievance existing among us, have connected themselves with such men as Dr. Warren, Messrs. Rowland, Pooley, and Co.—have used every art to mislead our uninformed and unwary members—have formed a committee, the object of which is to circulate, as widely as possible, the publications of the faction—and who, in despite of the solemn and binding resolution come to by the special leaders' meeting of Monday evening, the 9th inst., have proceeded to hold a public meeting, professedly to give information about their principles; but who, nevertheless, from the lips of their chairman substantially tell us, that they have no avowed principles—but that these principles are to be settled they know not when! Sir, these are the men with whom the Wesleyan Conference and the Wesleyan societies have at present to do. I consider it a high honour to our ministers that, with so few exceptions, they declare their abhorrence of these factious proceedings, and their determination to abide by the laws of the connexion. In these sentiments I am sure the Wesleyan societies generally will support them, and the present troubles will only end in the shame and confusion of the wandering agitators.—I am, Mr. Editor, yours,

"Hull, Feb. 19th, 1835.

A LOVER OF METHODISM AS IT IS."

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

In answer to the queries of some of our intelligent and respectable readers, we gladly inform them that the "stoppage of the supplies" to the General Chapel Fund, in the public collections made in the Liverpool North and South Circuits, has not answered the expectations of those precious philanthropists, the members of the "Grand Central Association." It is true, the collectors had patiently to endure the insulting demeanour of these persons, in a variety of instances—e. g., receiving a most contemptuous look, or a sneering grin, &c., in return for their civility in presenting the box. From this charge, however, we are willing to exempt the chairman of the Liverpool illegal Association, who, we understand, gave a most magnificent nod of refusal—when an opportunity was afforded him of acknowledging his gratitude to God, and his servants, for the comforts he was then enjoying in the house of the Lord, and of assisting others who were in danger of being deprived of similar privileges. These affairs may be too contemptible for the notice of the grand (!) central champions of liberty and benevolence; but the humble, despised, and right-hearted Methodists, with their friends, have thought and acted much differently, and the result is, that the public collection in aid of the Chapel Fund, in both the Liverpool circuits, is a fair advance upon that of the preceding year. In one chapel only was there a deficiency; and we take this opportunity of tendering our thanks to the Rev. J. S. Stamp for obliging us with a sight of the following note he has received respecting that small defalcation. It is as follows:—"Sir, I was sorry to hear of the "deficiency in the collection of yesterday; but as sorrow of itself will pay no debt, I have thought of "another way to mend the matter. Will you be so kind as to add this trifle (ten shillings) to the amount, "from a friend of Methodism as it is." This communication speaks volumes; and sooner would we see these few lines framed and glazed, and exhibited, from generation to generation, in the drawing-rooms of the great, than the splendid engravings of military and naval achievements, which so often decorate the walls: because—it is the triumph of principle over a faction, the most base and unprincipled in its objects as it is withering and destructive in its influence.

We are obliged to "Epsilon" for his valuable communication, and shall be additionally so for a series of papers on the subject he mentions. One leading object of the Illuminator is, "to exhibit the true principles of the Wesleyan Constitution."

Communications have also been received from "Y. Z.;" "Edward Jones;" "A Local Preacher;" "A lover of Methodism;" "A lover of Methodism as it is;" "O. R.;" "Alpha;" "Z.;" "Lex talionis;" and "Philalethes."—We also take this opportunity of presenting our cordial thanks to a number of valuable correspondents in various parts of the connexion, for the noble promptitude with which they responded to our call for suitable communications; and a multitude of documents for publication is now in our possession, which do equal credit to the head and heart of the respective authors; and which are powerfully demonstrative of the healthy Methodistical feeling throughout the body, and of an universal determination to resist, and ultimately to put down the present revolutionary faction. We respectfully solicit a continuance of their favours.

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THE ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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THE MORALITY OF THE ASSOCIATION.

The distortions of the human mind under some circumstances are extremely fantastical, and seem to be resolvable into no known laws of thought and judgment. It is perhaps one of the most difficult efforts of the intellect, even under favourable circumstances, to view all sides and tendencies of truth with equal accuracy, and in other states quite impossible. A high degree of excitement, devoted partizanship, a long continued view of one particular aspect of any given case, reading mere party writers, conversing constantly with one class of persons, and especially, self-interest, have the effect of warping the mind, so as to preclude the possibility of a fair and large perception of truth on any subject. Men whose judgment is thus biased, entertain no doubt respecting the validity of their opinions, and never imagine that their opponents can have any thing to say on their behalf, but push aside their arguments as mere refuse, whilst their own one-eyed dogmas, are put forth as "*the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.*"

We are led into these remarks by the avowal on the part of the partizans of the Association, of a somewhat novel notion of the doctrine of *morality*. It has often been maintained in our unhappy disputes, that the members of the Association are men of spotless morality, and consequently cannot be justly expelled the society. After giving utterance to this sentiment on many occasions verbally, its patrons have thought proper to put it into a written form. Amongst other documents, we find it expressed as the opinion of seventeen leaders, in a letter to the Rev. George Marsden. They say, respecting some of their expelled brethren, "They were not found guilty of any moral offence, and whose character, in the estimation of all good men, is exemplary and unimpeachable;" and, again—"we deprecate excommunication on *any* ground, except for *gross* immorality of conduct."

In the sense in which the term *morality* is used in these passages, we do not intend to fix any stigma on the persons who have been separated from the society.—Having stated this, we shall altogether drop their particular case, and deal only with the principle thus broadly avowed.—We do so, because we happen to know that it is a very favourite doctrine of the party—is in current use —is the subterfuge

under which they attempt to shelter themselves from the awful responsibility of their proceedings; and by which they are beguiling many of the pious and good into a tacit acquiescence, or an active co-partnership in their measures.

The word immorality is here used in the sense of an overt act of sin, such as drunkenness, swearing, impurity, theft, or some other gross outrage on public decency and the laws of God. Now the above statement is—"we deprecate excommunication on *any* ground, except for *gross* immorality of conduct." Will these members and abettors of the Association abide by this sentiment? If they do, we think it will carry them somewhat farther than they intended to go. One of the great faults of this opinion is, that it is their own—without any reference to the authority of the word of God. We always thought that the laws of Christ determined who were, and who were not, fit persons to belong to his church; but we are now told that none ought to be separated from it, on *any* ground, except for *gross* immorality. Then, on this principle, a person may be destitute of, and neglect all those parts of religion which consist of piety towards God, and yet be a fit member of the Christian church. He may trample on the truth, deny the Lord that bought him, and even sink into a state of absolute infidelity; and yet, if he is preserved from *gross* immorality, he may remain in the church; though his continuance there may be for the sole purpose of spreading his own pestiferous opinions, and carrying out his designs to destroy every thing vital and holy in Christianity. Nay, more: if this ground were tenable, it would follow that any one falling from the love of God, whether member or preacher, and losing sight of the spiritual and religious designs of Christian fellowship, might make use of his profession to excite agitation in the church, for the purpose of aiding and abetting any ulterior worldly or political design out of it. Once allow this maxim to become law, and this crafty purpose is secured. The church becomes the arena of debate—the nucleus of union for any purpose—the hiding place for worldly intrigue—the focus of unbelief; and yet, because no *gross* act of immorality is committed by its members, they must not be excommunicated.

The fallacy of this opinion consists in keeping fidelity and piety towards God out of the question. Morality separated from godliness does not constitute a Christian. This disjunction of piety and morality is always, in religious argument, unfortunate; but as it is now made by the Association party, we are driven to the necessity of adopting it. They claim exemption from all church censure, loss of privilege, and excommunication, on the ground of their not being immoral men, and publish to the world that they deprecate these things, except "for *gross* immorality." As they thus choose to separate morality from religion, in both its principles and institutions, we must examine their proceedings by the rules of godliness as taught in the New Testament.

It is obvious that these principles and rules, though thus altogether excluded, are, nevertheless, as high an order of truths as their favourite maxims of morality; and in a profession of Christianity, as binding on its disciples. Need we say, that the laws of Christian morality are the laws of the New Testament, and properly comprehend the whole of practical religion, arising out of its evangelical privileges, and its sanctifying spirit? This is a different thing to that limited and partial view of the subject which is so glaringly set forth in the proposition we oppose. It is this *half* view of a great and grave subject, which is the occasion of many of our brethren yielding themselves to evils, from which, had they a perception of the *whole* truth, they would recoil with abhorrence. Allowing them the benefit of their own plea, that they are not, in their own sense of the term, immoral; yet, by adding that which properly belongs to the definition of the term **GODLINESS**, we think we can convict them of great and serious offences.

We begin with the attempt to stop the supplies.—This is a law of the Association; it is a matter of concert amongst its members, and is now with them universally acted upon. Contributions towards the Auxiliary Fund, to aid the worn-out preachers and their destitute families; the Contingent Fund, to supply the gospel to the poor circuits in these united kingdoms; the Chapel Fund, to assist the trustees of chapels—or, in other words, to facilitate the preaching of the gospel; and the Missionary Fund, for the extension of the word of God to the destitute heathen nations—are all proscribed; and yet, we are told that no moral principle is affected by all this. We ask—is no religious, scriptural, or godly principle affected by it? Let us try.

We recur to the fund in aid of worn-out preachers, their widows, and orphan children. To say the least, they are of the species, they are fellow men, either friends or enemies. Have we any rule affecting such a case? Yes; most clear and explicit, even on the supposition that these decayed, now silent, and dying ministers were the *enemies*, and not the friends, of their flocks: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you—love your enemies, bless

them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your father that is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." But, say they, "we do love our ministers; it is a foul and slanderous impeachment of our character, to imagine for a moment, that we do not possess and exercise the purest love both to God and to them." What says St. John? "Whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" Truly, this new and philosophic mode of giving expression to the feeling of Christian love, would have perfectly confounded the simple and affectionate disciple who leaned on the bosom of his divine master! To him it would have appeared a very odd way of loving a class of men, not only to withhold all assistance to them in time of affliction and old age, but to do their utmost to prevent others affording it. Ah, venerable men, little did you think, when you left your peaceful homes, many long years ago, to return no more—with life glowing freshly on your countenances—with mind and piety, both vigorous—with joy and hope beating warmly in your bosoms: little did you think, when, at the call of your Lord, you began the itinerant life—sacrificed the quiet of a local habitation and a home—gave yourselves to consuming studies, and anxious cares for the church—diligent visits to the abodes of the poor and wretched—fervent prayer and zealous teaching, that you might save souls and edify the body of Christ: little did you think, venerable men, that when time had worn you out—left you the wreck of what you once were—age and infirmity pressing you down—your harp no longer strung to the music of redeeming love, but hung on the willow—the pre-monitions of death hanging around you, in the silence and obscurity of your state; that now, in the helplessness of your lot, you were to be left to die in want! And the widows and children of our departed ministers, what have they done? They, too, are consigned to the same fate, with the additional aggravation that they have to mourn the loss of their protector and friend, and are now thrown forlorn, and often helpless on the world, without any of those local friendships, and claims to sympathy and aid which long residence in a particular neighbourhood, and union with a single society and congregation give. Should the widow return to her native home, her relatives are dead; if she seeks a location amongst the early friends of her itinerant life, disappointment meets her—a new generation has risen up, and only a few remain to appreciate her departed husband's worth, or repeat the affectionate regards shewn to herself. She settles on some casual spot, perhaps unknown—has to begin life again by some industrious employment, and make up the scanty assistance she obtains from the connexion, by the instruction of children, or any other means in her power. The Association propose to deprive her even of this pittance: to throw her altogether on her own resources in old age: leave her to accidental charity, or suffer her to die in want.—Whilst we write this, grief and sorrow fill our heart, and we are ready to exclaim, in the language of the prophet—"Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people and go from them!" Is it possible that Christians and Methodists can do this? Had the thing been stated hypothetically—as something likely to take place—a short time ago, we could not have conceived it at all within the reach of a possible contingency. And yet to this course, every member of the Association is pledged; and, if we are to credit the published statements of the party, these persons consist of several hundred professed Christians! This mode of accomplishing their design agrees with the ancient barbarous practice of war, the holding of persons as hostages for the fulfilment of treaties. The Association publishes to the world, that they have certain measures to carry: that they are resolved to gain their point; and they will take the old preachers, widows, and fatherless children as hostages, from the opposite party, and if they will not yield their claims, they will starve them to death! Can they do this consistently with the religion they profess? We tell them, they cannot; and if the victims of their folly and wickedness happened to be their most inveterate enemies, they could not do it on the principles of the New Testament. The pure and disinterested benevolence of that blessed book is—"If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

If this be the scriptural rule respecting enemies, what is the treatment we owe to those who are of "the household of faith;" and not only so, but to the ministers of the sanctuary? The Apostolic doctrine is this—"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? And that they which wait at

the altar are partakers of the altar. Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." And again—"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." If the Association reply that these passages are not applicable, inasmuch as the persons in question are now no longer employed at their altars; this is unquestionably, in part, true; for they are old, infirm, worn down by past labours, and now only preach occasionally as their strength will allow. Does this mend the matter? Rather does it not add ten-fold to the enormity of the wickedness. These venerable men have been employed during the whole of their active life in proclaiming the "gospel of the blessed God," and have been made the honoured instruments of establishing and enlarging that system of religion which we so richly enjoy. That which our Lord said on another occasion, is true, as regards us and these holy men—"One sowed and another reaped. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour; other men laboured, and ye entered into their labours." Yes; they sowed in the midst of privations, toils, and tears, that which we are now so plentifully reaping. The church privileges which we so abundantly enjoy are, under God, the creation of the fathers of the connexion; some happily departed, and spared the pain and affliction of these times, and some waiting in the midst of solitude, weakness, and, unless they have means of their own, comparative poverty, for their summons to a brighter and a better world. And these are the persons, together with widows and fatherless children, whom their *soi-disant* disciples, would now, with more than African barbarity, throw into the bush and jungle to perish of hunger. Our heart bleeds for poor human nature! Fanaticism, like sin, can strip it of all its ornaments—freeze it into an iceberg of insensibility, or excite it to deeds which make reasonable men ashamed of the species—and religious men blush for the name they bear.

This is the morality of the Association—this its godliness! Such things may have existed before: but, if they have, they have been deemed too profligate to stain the page of history, for they are unrecorded. The annals of the church indeed relate many strange events; but we challenge the most erudite reader and critic in church history to produce a case parallel to this. We assert that no body of Christians were ever brought to assent to such a proposition, since the origin of Christianity. The thing is perfectly *unique*. It is such an experiment in *morals* and religion as never took place before; and is surrounded by a halo of glory or of infamy peculiarly its own.

We next inquire whether the supplies can be stopped from the Contingent Fund, the main object of which is to supply the gospel to the poorer circuits of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, on moral and Christian grounds. It is necessary here to premise that, on the confession of the Association, the true gospel is preached by the ministers of the Wesleyan body. They are not yet accused of heterodoxy. We believe this to be the truth, and that no body of men on earth more clearly, fully, zealously, and affectionately administer the Word of Life than these much calumniated servants of God. This admitted, it follows that in attempting to stop the supplies in this case, the effect is to impede, and, if possible, prevent the spread of the gospel itself. By withholding the means by which the gospel is carried to a people, you prevent them receiving and enjoying it. Hence, the plain question is, whether persons professing the doctrines of Christianity, as held by the Methodist Connexion, can have the right to prevent the spread of that which they consider divine truth? If they believed that the doctrines taught were erroneous, and dangerous corruptions of religion, then they would not only possess the right, but it would become their bounden duty to do all they could to stop the propagation of such dangerous delusions. But instead of this, they profess to hold a class of truths—divine, saving, consolatory—as the basis of their own hope; and then combine in large numbers to prevent the spread of these truths, by the very men from whom they themselves receive them. Can absurdity go beyond this? But it is not so much with the folly of the thing we have to do, as with its moral and religious principle. Then we at once affirm, that no set of men can unite to prevent the circulation of the gospel, without being guilty of a most palpable and glaring act of impiety against God. No doubt most of the members of the Association would acquiesce in this sentiment, if others instead of themselves were the parties concerned. Suppose, for instance, any class of rival Christians were to unite themselves into a Grand Central Association, for the purpose of stopping the supplies of the Methodist ministry, and, in order to carry their purpose into effect, printed little red books like those of this party, employed agents to go from door to door amongst our members, and friends, to urge upon them the duty of withholding their contributions from funds to support and extend the doctrines they heard and believed; would not every man of the Association pronounce it to be not only an act of daring effrontery, but of equal impiety? They might justify their proceeding by saying—"Although we believe your doctrines to be true, yet being

members of the Church of England, or of an independent church, I think there are some points of *discipline* amongst you Methodists, which are not exactly to our taste; and, on this account, we think ourselves called upon to use our most zealous efforts to stop the supplies employed for the spread of such a system." Would not every man's spirit revolt at such narrowness and bigotry as this? Yet this is the true case before us—with this only difference—that the opposing parties are professed adherents of the cause they attempt to destroy.

But this reckless measure involves consequences of a most fearful nature as regards the souls of the people belonging to the societies of the needy circuits and the population surrounding them. The effect is to deprive these poor people of the ordinances of religion and the Word of God which they now, by the aid of this fund, have the privilege to enjoy. We ask, "and these sheep, what have they done?" O, how sublime is that morality, and how pure, holy, and benevolent that religion, which would deprive these sheep and lambs of Christ's flock of the means of grace, till a question in dispute respecting church government is adjusted to the satisfaction of the agitating party, when they themselves do not know what frame of economy would suit them best! We are warranted in this assertion from the fact that they have been veering from one point of the compass to another ever since our disturbances began, and we defy any man to make out a consistent scheme, from any thing they have hitherto proposed. Then, how long the preaching of the gospel among the poor is to be suspended, it is impossible to say; if, till the sagacity, broad and expanded views, disinterested patriotism, elevated piety, and noble Christian zeal of the Association shall have formed an ecclesiastical platform which shall outvie all others for excellency, they will have grown lean enough. They are serving all the rules, usages, and institutions of Methodism, just as Aaron served the ear-rings, bracelets, and jewels of the murmuring Israelites in the wilderness, committing them to the fire; and, if we do not greatly mistake the question, the result will be the same—there will come out *a calf*; and when this image of the united wisdom of these sage religious legislators shall be set up, the cry will be heard—"These be thy gods, O Israel?" In the meantime the ministry is to be withdrawn from the parts of the connexion not able to pay for it themselves. On their principle, this may happen in any place, and if all our people were equally illiberal, it would befall every poor part of the united kingdom. Suppose the Contingent Fund should so far fail as to make it necessary to withdraw the gospel from the principality of Wales, or from the Shetland islands, then the plan of these noble philanthropists—these pure, holy, and loving Christians, would receive its consummation. How differently did Dr. Clarke feel and act. In old age he braved the dangers of the northern sea to visit the poor Shetlanders. With the zeal and animation of youth, he entered into their state, visited their societies, preached to them the unsearchable riches of Christ, employed his utmost influence to raise money for their use, and especially to supply them with the ministry of the Word. Great was his success and the success of the preachers employed in the toilsome and self-denying work of these Islands. But now, another class of moralists and Christian zealots has risen up, who deem it not inconsistent either with morality or religion to destroy this work. We ask any man of either sense or feeling out of the Association, which bears the stamp of Christian piety, charity, and zeal—the efforts of Dr. Clarke and his friends to extend the preaching of the gospel to these poor and destitute Islanders, or that of the Association, to withdraw it?—It is of no avail for these persons to say, this is not what they mean. We affirm that this is what they are doing. Some hundreds of professed Christians in the town of Liverpool alone, setting aside all other places, have not only adopted the theory of the combination, but have acted upon it. As far as they are concerned, the supplies are withheld. With perfect *sang froid*, in the present quarterly visitation, old and young, and especially the latter, have stood forth to inform the minister, that they had found the pardoning love of God, enjoyed great spiritual privileges and consolation in the ordinances, felt unfeignedly grateful to God for them, intended to hold fast, and lay hold on eternal life, that nothing *should turn them out of the way*, or cause them to leave the people of God, and then the whole has been closed by a declaration that they must withhold their usual contribution to the yearly collection. This, it is argued, is no sin against morals; be it so, is it no sin against that which is much higher than human morality—the love which is due to the Saviour and the souls of men? If that Saviour was on earth again when these men are calling for fire to descend on those ministers, whom they have set up as their enemies most falsely, but who have, in fact, been their best friends—would he not say, "Ye know not of what spirit ye are;"—and when they refuse to aid in the salvation of the poor and destitute, "How dwelleth the love of God in you?"

There is a feature of peculiar barbarity in this part of the proceedings of the faction: it is in marking the most destitute the victims of their vengeance. One would think that with persons so pious and patriotic as our *pseudo* friends, the last to be visited with loss and ruin would be the poor and necessitous. But with them "the end justifies the means" and if they can accomplish their revolutionary purposes, break down the *dominant faction*, and establish a religious democracy—they care not if it is done by the disruption of the societies, the withdrawal of the gospel, the inroads of the destroyer, and the ruin of souls. They can lay aside their adherence to the truth they profess as divine; they can abandon and forsake the cross, as a means of salvation to others; they can enter into plan and concert to prevent the proclamation and glad tidings of salvation; they can cease for a time, till their schemes are accomplished, to love the souls of their brethren, and care for their happiness; they can claim the right of reducing to ruin the churches collected and fostered by the prayers, labours, and sacrifices of those who have gone before them; they can afford to lay aside all those noble feelings of faith, hope, love, good will, and zeal which relate to the extension of the kingdom of Christ; and whilst God is calling forth his people to the task of evangelizing the world, they can, it seems, with perfect piety and without outraging Christian morals, throw the whole weight of their influence into the opposite scale, and impede the growth of religion and the work of God. How they will substantiate their right to the claim of taking their present measures, on the ground of Christian principle—the obligations of religion—the spirit of the gospel—the example of Christ—the claims of the world—and the love of souls, is a question we leave to be settled betwixt themselves and the judge of all.

The remarks already made will be applicable to another class of persons in the connexion, whom the measures of these *moral men* are calculated to injure. We refer now to the Chapel Fund, and the great body of trustees. It is known that these brethren have entered into large pecuniary obligations; that they can derive no personal emolument from their trust—even in prosperous circumstances—but that in fact many of the chapels are in an embarrassed state, and the trustees are liable. Now these charitable, disinterested, and devoted men have taken these burthens upon them with the understanding that they should have the co-operation of the connexion. The resolution of the Association is to the effect that all the supplies shall be withheld from them in their state of embarrassment—that they shall be left to cope with their difficulties alone: meet deficiencies out of their own private resources, or go to prison, while their prospects are wrecked and their families ruined. This is no exaggerated statement; these effects must, in a few months, literally follow, if their scheme were to succeed. Let us examine how this part of their proceedings will comport with Christian morality and the spirit of true religion.

The trustees of chapels hold their trust for the benefit of the societies and congregations meeting in the premises. As the whole society cannot be trustees, a few are selected at the instance and for the benefit of the whole. Being placed in trust, they are obliged to take upon themselves the pecuniary responsibilities; but it is evidently done on the faith that they shall be supported by their brethren. If any particular society or congregation succeed in saddling the responsibilities of a chapel upon some dozen of their members, and should then turn round and say—"Now that we have made you fast by the law, we intend to leave you in the lurch, and neither pay seat-rents, nor in any other way to help you out of your difficulties:"—would it not be seen at once that faith was broken with these men? That they had been trepanned into a difficulty, and then left to get out of it as they could? Where is the point of difference betwixt this case and the general case of the trustees through the connexion? The principles of the Association carried out would be a breach of faith with them of the most gross and iniquitous kind. Now we ask—can a breach of faith be perpetrated on the principles of Christian morality and godliness? Put the case as betwixt two men: can one of these men decoy another into a difficult, responsible, and onerous situation for his benefit, and then leave him to bear the burthen alone, with honesty, honour, and piety? He would be avoided, as a person not fit either for respectable or Christian society! The case thus put is the case of the trustees generally: to leave them in this embarrassment, or to destroy the only fund which can relieve them, is to break faith with them in the most wanton and wicked manner. To do this may symbolize with the morality of the Association, but we apprehend it will hardly comport with that of the New Testament. To deceive and then to abandon the victim of the deception to his fate, is in ill keeping with the precepts of that Almighty Saviour who is designated "the Truth." That it may not be imagined that we are grappling with an ideal evil, a case of hypothetical breach of faith, or of fanciful opposition, we beg to inform our readers, that in this as in other things, the Association are

acting on their principles. When, a few sabbaths ago, the collection for the Chapel Fund—or, in other words, the trustees—was made, the combination brought their law into effect; they appeared in their places in the different congregations, and when the boxes were presented to them, all refused to contribute, and many added a laugh, a grin, a twist of the nose, a toss of the head, or a leering smile of contempt. This was in the house of God; it had respect to the support of His worship, and the assistance of brethren in distress; and yet there is nothing in opposition to either morality or religion in this! Is this doing to others as we would, in similar circumstances, expect others to do to us? We do fear that the reason that none of these things appear in opposition even to morality is, that the true morality of the gospel is of too refined a nature for the spiritual vision of our opponents.

But this question respecting chapels is very intimately connected with the public worship of God; and if the scheme to break up this fund should succeed, the consequence must be to close them. These chapels have often been erected by a comparatively poor people, after long and arduous difficulties, and by a united and simultaneous effort. The poverty which made the erection difficult operates against their preservation from debt, they often find that their hopes are disappointed, and year after year new embarrassments press upon them, till they are obliged to have recourse to this proscribed fund. Here again, the evil falls on the most necessitous; and there are hundreds of places of worship amongst us that must be closed in the course of a short time, if they could receive no aid from this fund. We again ask—can this be done without a direct and palpable violation of the principles of sacred piety? Acting on these principles, every good man must ardently desire to see provision made for the preaching of the gospel and the worship of God, on the model of his own views. The Wesleyan connexion—with unexampled zeal, liberality, and affectionate concern for their fellow-countrymen, in times when there was much less care for the souls of the people than at present—filled the poorest parts of our populous towns, together with the rural parts of the country, with their chapels, to accommodate the poor, and to invite them to the comfort of public worship and the knowledge of salvation. If the authors of these plans were acting piously and patriotically—pray, what are those doing who are pursuing a diametrically opposite course, by endeavouring to pull down what the others built up? This is the plan that these *innocent* men are pursuing, and if they do not succeed, it will be no fault of theirs. They are, in effect, saying to these poor societies and congregations, as they are saying to the preachers—*We love you dearly*; but, rather than be disappointed in our projects to bring down the priesthood, we will destroy your sanctuaries, scatter your congregations, break up your societies, and reduce the noble monuments of the piety and zeal of yourselves and your ancestors to a state of total ruin. This is their morality—this their godliness!

We have left ourselves but little space to mark the demonstrations of pure morality and ardent piety of this combination towards the Missionary society. They have resolved to stop the supplies of this institution. There are three parties interested in this decree: the missionaries and their families, the native churches collected in the wilderness, and the heathen world at large.

The Missionaries and their families are deeply interested in the stoppage of supplies.—Every Missionary who leaves his native country and home—puts his health and life to hazard by entering a tropical or frigid climate: dwells amongst the savages of New Zealand, or the hordes of wandering Africans in the desert—does so with the perfect understanding that his wants shall be supplied; and if obliged to return with broken health, that he shall have the benefit of advice and medicine; and, in case of his death, his wife and children shall not be abandoned to penury and want. This is the agreement. On the one side, there is the offering of service: of all which man holds dear in life—of home, health, and life; and on the other side, there is the pledge of bare support. Every man of the Association has broken this pledge. The Missionary and his family are abandoned in a foreign country to their fate; there they are left to meet their miseries, unprotected; and if not protected and provided for by the less savage tribes around them, to perish of hunger. We are told that there is no violation of moral principle in this. O spirit of faction! what art thou not capable of doing? Surely, "*blindness in part hath happened to our Israel*;" and not only the blindness of the mind, but that which is worse—the obtuse insensibility of the heart!

But the infant churches which have been formed by the exertion of the Missionaries, are deeply interested in this stoppage of the supplies.—By the mercy of God, some success has attended their exertions in every place; and in others, an amount equal to that of the most prosperous periods of the Christian church. In the West Indies, in Southern Africa, in the South Sea Islands, triumphs have been gained—

which mark, in a most encouraging manner, the power of the gospel and the finger of God. But, from a variety of causes, these new churches are dependent. Many of them are just awakening to a perception of their degradation, and are emerging from the darkness and misery of savage life. Besides, they are beginning to perceive the value of social habits, and, connecting them with religion, to lay the basis of civilized life. Cottages, gardens, corn fields, schools and chapels, begin to appear where all was dreary sterility. The incipient principles of government, law, civil order, and all the great ties which bind man to man, are in operation, and begin—like flowers in spring—to display their opening beauties. Now, let the principles of the Association be acted upon, and these stations must be abandoned. The rising light must sink again into midnight darkness—the smiling spring of civilization must be again lost in the winter of barbarity—the budding joys and hopes, created by the presence of the Missionaries, and the truths they have taught, must be nipped and blighted by the return of heathenism—and all the fair prospects of the church in the universal triumph of Messiah's kingdom thrown into obscurity! While this is doing by the machinations of these destroyers, they loudly proclaim—We are men of spotless character: not a moral stain rests on us; we are ready—nay, foremost—in season and out of season, for every good word and work; we love God, and love the brethren; and it is consummate villany to treat us in any other way than as the most innocent and virtuous of men. Let the wrongs and injuries inflicted on innocent and unsuspecting Negro, Hottentot, Caffre, Singalese, Hindoo, and South Sea Indian churches, reply to this boast. Their principle is to make them the means of inflicting more punishment on a third party.—This is their morality—this their religion! We are bold to affirm, that a more immoral, anti-Christian, irreligious, and diabolical principle was never patronized by men professing godliness; and we doubt whether an equal number of men as that which composes the Association could be found, out of the pale of Methodism, who would have the unblushing impudence to avow such a sentiment.

Besides the parties already mentioned, the whole heathen world is deeply injured by this stoppage of Missionary supplies. It is neither more nor less than consigning them over to the tender mercies of heathenism and the devil. A pretty general impression, we believe, has been made on the Christian public, that the Church has long been remiss, and become guilty before God in not making provision for the wants of the heathen. Our Missionary societies are founded on the principle of this obligation, and are using their utmost exertions to cause the Christian world to come forward to the discharge of their duty. If they are right, then it follows that this anti-Missionary Association is wrong. If the British churches are acting on the clear command of Christ, the spirit of the gospel, the charity of religion, the grand and sublime revelations of God—then those who are taking the opposite course, are frustrating all these. If the friends of the Missionary enterprise are the true friends of their race and of the world, and are promoting its highest destinies and happiness—then it follows that those who are for stopping the stream of life are misanthropists—haters of mankind.

That we may not be accused of fanciful and unsupported accusation, in this branch of our subject, we re-publish the following hand-bill, which was posted on the walls of Blackburn, from one end of the town to the other, on Saturday night, the 7th instant, previously to sermons being preached on the following day and the Missionary meeting being held on Monday evening:—

“TO THE WESLEYAN PUBLIC.

“By public advertisement we learn that a Wesleyan Missionary Meeting is to be held in this town in the course of a few days: we, therefore, deem it our duty publicly to expose the hypocrisy embodied in that annunciation, in order to counteract its deceptive tendency.

“It is needless to state that the Wesleyan Conference, at their last congress, *unconstitutionally* established what they were pleased to call, a “Theological Institution for the better education of the junior preachers.” As this was done in direct opposition to the will of our venerable founder, and in bold defiance of the laws of our connexion, (if indeed any such exist,) it was quite rational to suppose, that such unjustifiable proceedings would meet with the stern opposition of all enlightened Methodists. The obtaining of the necessary supplies thus became a matter of serious embarrassment, and difficulties of no ordinary magnitude seemed to place insuperable obstructions in their way; but, as dishonesty is seldom without an expedient, these ardent projectors conceived the design of connecting their embryonic Institution with the Missionary Society, and thus to obviate all difficulties at once.

“But here we may seriously ask, is it just, is it honest, is it ingenuous, that money collected to promote the noble objects contemplated by the Missionary society, should be appropriated to support a paltry, party scheme, designed to strengthen the interest of an intolerant faction? Had we not sufficient proof of the mal-appropriation of the Missionary Funds previous to the introduction of this autocratical design, to prove the injustice practised by mercenary individuals on the credulous part of the Methodist public? We might advert to the *enormous* expenditure incurred in the support of the Missionary Secretaries and their establishment in London, which, in the course of three years, viz—1831, 1832, and 1833, amounted to little less than SIX THOUSAND POUNDS.

“Can such abominable misapplication of the offerings of the poor be justified in the sight either of God or man?

"Will you then, Wesleyan Methodists of Blackburn, unscrupulously agree to support an obvious imposition on your credulity, in the shape of a College Institution? Nay, rather let your united responses emphatically proclaim, "No!" Impeach not your intelligence—your independence—your high regard for the principles of right, in sanctioning, by your contributions, such flagrant acts of injustice.

"Let the result of the present appeal to your liberality testify to the world, and your unrighteous rulers, that you are really in earnest in discountenancing such reckless and dishonourable conduct. Convince them that you are not so easily induced to bear pecuniary burdens, imposed upon you without your consent, and against your protestations;—that you ought to have some little say in the formation of those laws and regulations which are designed to affect yourselves, and, it may be, your posterity.

"Blackburn, March 4, 1835."

If this does not shew the *animus* of the faction, we know not what can.

We are quite aware of the argument which will be brought against all we here say, or can say in any other way, to convict these parties of inconsistency. It is—that it is not in opposition to the Funds and Institutions of the connexion that they combine, but against Conference—against a dominant faction—against the proceedings of the Manchester district meeting—against the Theological Institution—and against malversation connected with these things. All we at present think it necessary to say on this is—that the evils complained of are *not proved*, and, if they were, the proof could not justify the proceedings. If the men of the Association have injuries to be redressed, or revolutionary purposes to carry, they cannot make other parties suffer—suffer as a sacrifice, as an atonement, on the altar of whose sufferings they intend to place and carry their objects, without violating every principle of justice, morality, and religion.

With unfeigned grief, we openly declare it as our deliberate and settled conviction, that as vile a leaven of antinomianism as ever afflicted the church of God, is eating its way amongst us—that the anarchical proceedings of this irreligious movement, are based on this, and fed and nurtured by its deceptive influence. This term, we know, is somewhat unusual amongst us. Thank God! our doctrines are not antinomian, neither is it in the nature of our system to produce it; but whilst it is possible for a theoretic antinomian to be practically pious and holy, so it is equally possible for parties to hold pure and elevated views of religion, and yet in practice, to spurn the laws of Christ. This new notion respecting church membership, put forth in the letter to Mr. Marsden, is one of the most antinomian ever broached by any section of the Christian church. The principles of the Association, we have seen, are of the same kind; and the facility and ease—nay, exulting joy—with which the parties break down the fences of the church—scatter the flock—snap the ties of religious fellowship—defame the ministry—deprive the old preachers of their support—leave the poor societies at home to their own resources—abandon the trustees to the burthen and hardship of their lot—and then devote the Missionary work and the heathen world to perish together;—we say, the state of mind which could superinduce all this, is warped by a deep antinomian alloy. Methodism will, in the end, work it off; for—as it only exists on the foundation of truth and purity—an evil of this description cannot long be endured.

THE SPIRIT OF THE FACTION.

"Some men are singularly fitted for great actions; superior to discouragement, they press through difficulties, which, to others, appear to be insurmountable, and no more regard opposition than does the stately bark the opposing billows of the ocean; nor reproach, than the noisy spray, or the foaming waves which occasionally break upon her bows, as she rides contemptuously through them."—*Association Catechism, Part III. p. 67.*

Unlike the men who "say and do not," these teachers illustrate their doctrine by practice, and the great principle here laid down in the Catechism, is exemplified by the heroes of the Association.

On the eighth of February, a Methodist minister being about to administer the sacrament at Leeds-street chapel, exhorted such as were "in love and charity with their neighbours," to "draw near," and "take it," to their "comfort." It was not long before Rowland advanced to the person appointed to examine the tickets; and, with the help of another champion, showed his "love and charity," by *forcing* his way to the Lord's table. On the eleventh he made his appearance at the Hull meeting, and gave the following account of the preachers and people, with whom, three days before, he had received the holy communion:—"I will give you a few directions;—be silent when you are bid—always give your money at once and freely, and never ask what is to become of it. Aye—I am sorry to say it—I regret it; but I avow it from close and many years actual observation—these are the qualities that will recommend you to your ministers—these are the things that will procure you their smiles. Beyond this, if you are very fond of office, you will have it; you will be courted; you will have the pastoral

care of your preachers; they will have love and affection for you and these good deeds, and after your smooth and oily path is terminated, they would, if they might, snugly slip you into paradise itself."—(*Lantern*, No. 8, p. 119.) St. Paul has said—"If any man that is called a brother be covetous, or a railer, with such an one no not to eat," 1st Cor. c. 5, v. 11. Now, if what this orator "avows from close and many years actual observation" be true, it is certain that the preachers, in general, are "covetous," in the very worst sense of that expression. It is equally certain that although he knew this on Saturday, he yet determined, in spite of the apostle, sacramentally "to eat" with these "covetous" men on Sunday, and then set off to Hull to perform the part of a "railer" against them, on Wednesday. From all this, it would appear, that the men who "are singularly fitted for great actions," are so "superior to discouragement," arising from apostolic injunctions, that they "ride contemptuously through them." There is a certain class of persons who need to have good memories. These wholesale "railing accusations," and abundantly more, are found in the *Lantern*; and yet the editor gravely says—"we would not willingly insert any thing calculated, in the slightest degree, to injure the personal character of any individual, whether priest or layman;" and goes on to talk to other people about the sad consequences of being "revilers."

The Hull meeting furnishes a specimen of the kind of fair play which is to be expected at the hands of the people who conceive themselves to be "singularly fitted for great actions." The orator laid it down as an axiom, that "a court of appeal ought to be pure, uncommitted, unpledged, unsuspected." He then added—"we have come to Hull to make our appeal," (*Lantern*, p. 117.) Very well; then the court, we suppose, is "pure," and "unsuspected." In the first place, the Hull *Packet*, of Feb. 20, says that "a majority of five to one of the individuals then present were not Wesleyan Methodists." In fact, this "majority" was composed of persons of all creeds and characters, who agreed in nothing but hating the Methodist Conference. In the second place, this "pure" court proceeded to hear Rowland's "appeal" on his own case, in the absence of all the other parties concerned, and without ever giving them notice of trial, nay, it was stated, by the chairman, that no reply would be allowed, and that "police officers" were in attendance, to take into custody any friend, who dared to say a word on their behalf. In the third place, this "pure" court, after hearing the plaintiff, and gagging the defendants, returned a verdict of guilty against them, by "loud cries of shame, shame." In the last place, this "pure" court deemed it right to compliment the speaker on what appeared to them to be his peculiar excellencies; and, accordingly, after he had said—1st, that he was "anathematized," which was a gross untruth—2d, that he was "ex-communicated," though he had actually communicated only three days before—and 3d, after he had become a "railer" against the Methodist preachers, who, he said, were known to be "covetous," although he had just been "eating" with them at the Lord's table, all in flat opposition to the New Testament, it is added, "he sat down amid thunders of applause." It would seem, therefore, that these appellants have special reasons for preferring this court of appeal to every other. Accordingly, they say, "We have lost our confidence in Conference." They can introduce no police officers there. "We will not go to a special district meeting." "There they have a way of hearing both sides." "We have come to Hull;" and that was far better for them than going to the Vice-Chancellor.

We have further proof how "singularly some men are fitted for great actions," and how "contemptuously they ride through difficulties which, to others, appear insurmountable," in the copious issue of counterfeit tickets, which has recently taken place in Liverpool. It was intended that these, in their manufacture, should resemble, as exactly as possible, those distributed by the preachers; and the cheat, though certain, is not readily discovered. This device, not unworthy of the "ineffable hypocrisy" of its authors, among other ends, intended to enable expelled persons, and others, to obtain access to sacraments, love feasts, band meetings, along with the accredited members of the Methodist society. A young Associationist, yet in his teens, was recently detected in presenting one of these documents, as his passport to the Lord's table, and thus literally making his way to the altar with "a lie in his right hand." Common people when found out in such matters, generally see "difficulties which appear to be insurmountable." Where there is such precocity in the art of deception, and such old adepts behind the scene—first to direct and encourage such youths, and then to laugh at their exploits as a capital joke—detection will be attended with no "difficulties" at all; for they "regard the reproach" arising from such an "untoward event" as a clear proof how "singularly they are fitted for great actions."

The editor of the *Lantern* (No. 8, page 128,) says, "The following anecdote we insert on the authority of a most respectable gentleman in Birmingham, a trustee for

three Methodist chapels there. Dr. Clarke, when in Birmingham, used to make our friend's house his home. Soon after the fatal Conference which sanctioned the proceedings of the late special district meeting, in 1827, the Dr. came to his house as usual, happening to pass through Birmingham; and in the course of conversation touching on this topic, observed—"The Conference have spent so many days in doing the devil's work, and they have done it as the devil wished." And though they say "we would not, willingly, insert any thing calculated, in the slightest degree, to injure the personal character of any individual, whether priest or layman," yet this was such a choice morsel of slander that they could not resist the temptation of repeating it in No. 9.

Should any of our readers suppose that the most "respectable gentleman" and the "friend" whose house was Dr. Clarke's home, is one and the same person, and that the "anecdote" was given on his authority, and is, therefore, true in itself; it is to be feared they do not yet understand the true character of either the paragraph or the party. The following letter, addressed to the Rev. John Waterhouse, having illuminated ourselves, perhaps may do the same for others.

"Vauxhall Grove, Birmingham, March 6, 1835.

"Dear Sir—I am surprised to see it stated in the *Watchman's Lantern*, of Feb. 25, 1835, that my venerable and highly esteemed friend, Dr. Adam Clarke, in a conversation when at my house, after the Leeds special District Meeting, in 1827, on that subject said—"The Conference has spent so many days in doing the Devil's work, and they have done it as the Devil wished." It is true the Dr. paid me a visit at that time; and I hope I shall not forget or lose the benefit of his conversation and prayers. But I do solemnly declare he never made use of such expressions as the above, or any thing like them; nor do I believe he was capable of doing so. He always spoke well and most affectionately of his brethren the preachers; and although Mr. Moore and he differed on some points, he always said—"He is a great and good man."

"I wish this to appear in contradiction of the false statement in the *Lantern*; you will please to use it for that purpose in what way you think proper.

"I am, Sir, respectfully yours,
"SAMUEL HICKLING."

"There is nothing new under the sun." Some centuries ago, the two spirits of lying and liberty, of falsehood and freedom, appeared in a state of alliance. It was the high born spirit of freedom which said—"We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man;" but it was connected with a spirit derived from a "father" who had no "truth in him." What has happened once may happen again. The Methodists and their friends may be deceived by counterfeit tickets, and other devices, as the eleven were with the man who dipped his finger with them in the dish. These tricks may be associated with violence as great and as successful as that which said, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us;" but when the wielders of such weapons begin to talk of the great good they have done or will do to Methodism, or to the general cause of human salvation, it is just like Judas and his employers taking to themselves the credit of having redeemed the world.

THOUGHTS ON THE ASSOCIATION.

"Combustible materials!"—"Application of the match to the train!"—"Watchman's Lantern!"—"Dark Lantern!"—"Mine sprung!"—Guy Fawkes: gunpowder plot and the Association!"—These words and thoughts—and your readers have met with them before—shot past each other in my mind, with the rapidity of lightning, while reading your introductory remarks in the first number of the *Illuminator*; in which you have humorously characterised and justly denounced that contemptible publication, called the *Watchman's Lantern*. The whole scheme of the infamous gunpowder plot of 1605—its origin, plan, contrivers, and failure—rushed into my mind: presenting itself as the prototype of the ridiculously called, "Grand Central Association," in its "organized determined opposition" to the unity, order, and prosperity of the Wesleyan societies; and in its subterranean and desperate, but futile attempts to "blow up" the Conference and constitution of Wesleyan Methodism. The history of that infernal design of

Popish malignity, and hostility against the Protestant religion and liberties of our country, recurred to my mind; and the "gunpowder plot" of 1605 against Protestantism, and the "Association's" plot of 1835 against Wesleyan Methodism appeared so to assimilate in spirit, counsel, design, and work, while one point of resemblance after another presented itself to view, that I could not help snatching up a fragment of paper, and recording the coincidence—of which, with a few alterations, the communication that I now send you, is a copy.

I thought—Why look at the *spirit* of the Association, as breathed forth in all the speeches, publications, and proceedings of that "grand" body—with all their professions of piety. How little of that "charity which envieth not—vaunteth not itself—is not puffed up—doth not behave itself unseemly—rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth," &c. ! On the contrary—how factious, inflammatory, suspicious, and malevolent ! Or look at the *counsels* of those sapient reformers : how little of the "wisdom that is from above—that is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated; full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" ! Rather—what crooked policy, intrigue, and artifice—with weekly meetings held for the purpose of collecting, talking over, and then spreading abroad the idle stories and wicked calumnies, which have been forged during the week, to injure the character of Methodist preachers generally, and those preachers and members in particular who have, by their firm and consistent conduct, become most obnoxious to these enemies of genuine Methodism—spreading also their inflammatory addresses and earnest appeals, for pecuniary aid to carry on law proceedings, among our *Sunday School* and *factory children* !

Observe, too, the "*combustible materials*" which these desperate men tell us "have been *long* collecting;" and with which they are filling *their* "magazine" and "mine," in "*Christian Advocates*"—" *Watchman's Lanterns*"—"affectionate addresses"—"Little Sermons"—"Chancery proceedings"—with personal invective, misrepresentations, slanders, and falsehoods, in abundance. It is by the explosion of these precious materials that they hope to see the "turrets quiver," the "citadel totter," and the sacred edifice of Methodism "blown up," which has stood, though frequently assailed, and from various quarters, for more than a century—and has acquired beauty from age, and stability from time.

We may remark also, that as the conspirators against the religion and liberties of these realms, in 1605, had their Guy Fawkes and *tool*, who declared that he was ready to blow himself up with those whom he intended to destroy, and to bury himself beneath the ruins which he intended to create : so it appears that the Association have their *tool*, which they are handling and employing in this conspiracy. He has been detected "dressed in a *cloak* and

boots, with a *dark lantern* in his hand—the matches and other combustibles being found in his pockets; the atrociousness of his guilt and the despair of pardon inspiring him with resolution,” having embarked in this enterprise, and pledged himself to his employers, he seems determined to go all lengths and to run all risks, and all from love to Methodism!

And then the *design* of this “grand Association.” True, it is not to blow up, with gunpowder, the king, his nobles and his commons; or, to sever and scatter, high in air, the mangled limbs and bodies of men: but it is to separate friends—to sow discord among brethren—to disturb, divide, and scatter peaceable and united societies of Christian men, contented with, and thankful for the religious ordinances and privileges which they enjoy. It is by stigmatising the ministers of religion with the epithets of Popes, tyrants, mercenaries, &c.—to alienate from them the people of their charge, and to induce them not only to withdraw their esteem, but to withhold their support from their institutions, and to leave them, their aged and afflicted fathers and brethren, their widows and orphans, to poverty and want. It is by re-echoing the popular cry about the “people’s rights” and “religious liberty,” to promote a spirit of insubordination—to set at defiance all ecclesiastical order and discipline—and to “organize a determined opposition” to all scriptural, legitimate pastoral authority in the church of God. It is by destroying an imaginary domination among the preachers, to establish over them a real and oppressive one among themselves; and to shew, that *they* are generally the greatest tyrants, when they get the power, who are loudest in their cry against oppressions and tyranny. In a word—it is to revolutionize Wesleyan Methodism, and to make it something essentially different from what it ever was, and from what, I hope, it ever will be.

And I ask also, what have these conspirators against the well-being of our connexion *already effected*? They have said, “Come with us and see our zeal for the Lord,” and it must be acknowledged that they have done much. They have succeeded in beguiling many simple-hearted and pious persons—they have produced discord in families—they have separated leaders from their members, and members from their leaders—they have annihilated classes—they have disturbed and injured congregations—they have poisoned the minds of Sunday school children, and taught them to contemn their ministers—and what is most to be deplored, they have injured if not ruined many precious souls; their public meetings and inflammatory speeches, have produced a most withering and baneful influence on the piety of many who have been persuaded to attend them, and listen to the slanders that have there been propagated; and having been tempted to leave those Christian ministers and friends with whom they had been happily united, and through whose instrumentality they had been brought into the fold of Christ; are now without a fold and without a shepherd, and

many of them, it is to be apprehended, will never more be united to the church of God.

Now I fearlessly charge all this upon the spirit and counsels—the designs and doings of this “grand central association;” and from what I have seen and known of its working and influence, and I happen to know a good deal too much about it, I denounce it as a most wicked conspiracy against the just and scriptural rights of the preachers—a most base attempt to divide a happy and united people, and an experiment made upon the piety and intelligence of the Methodist connexion, which, succeed as it may, must ultimately cover the contrivers and agents of it with confusion and disgrace. In conclusion, I may observe, that I am no party man; and though I love Methodism *as it is*, and thank God for it, I am far from thinking that it cannot be improved; *but from my soul do I abhor the whole scheme of the anti-Wesleyan “Association.”*

Manchester.

O. R.

THE METHODIST NEW CONNEXION, AND ITS REPORTED PROSPERITY.

“He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.”

Successful exertion to promote the cause of Christ in the world is an object which, to every religious community, and especially to its pastors and teachers, must be exceedingly desirable. This *desideratum* has, by the blessing of Almighty God, been realized in the Wesleyan Methodist connexion to a most gratifying extent. Its triumphs of faith, hope, and charity are to be found in many parts of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. When the ministers and friends of this community have appealed to its success, to demonstrate that the system which the New Connexion avow to be both unscriptural and tyrannical, “works well,” it has been customary to refer them to the system of Popery, and to the vast amount of territory over which it has diffused its power. The sophistry of this mode of reply is, we trust, at length seen by some of the more respectable members of that body. They now appear to see—what we have long seen—that the case of the Romish church spreading a corrupted Christianity, accommodated to the passions and habits of fallen beings, and that of the Methodist body, extending an unadulterated Christianity, at open war with all that is “earthly, sensual, and devilish” in the world, is without analogy, and consequently without illustration. We are now gravely informed, by their most talented writer, that the numerical prosperity of the connexion to which he belongs, exceeds that of the Wesleyan Methodists—and he has selected the last ten years for the demonstration of his principle! But this kind of reasoning has, in a former number of the *Illuminator*, been proved unsound. We have appealed to facts, which are known to be “stubborn things,”—and these bear undeniable testimony that the Old system, during thirty-eight years—from 1744 to 1782—operated, under circumstances far more inauspicious, with greater vigour and effect on the masses of the people than the New. Its prosperity was above treble the amount of the New system, with all its announced superior claims to the patronage of scripture, reason, and the British constitution. Having put our readers in remembrance of these things, we may ask—Why has the respectable minister to whom we have made reference, confined himself to the last ten years? Why did he not increase the number? An examination of the Minutes of the New Connexion will, we are inclined to think, supply the reason. Beyond this chosen ground is to be seen “the nakedness of the land.” It is true, the Minutes of 1824, report an increase of *thirty-one* members! But the Minutes of 1823 report a *decrease* of members! The Minutes of 1822 report *another decrease* of members! And *another decrease* is reported in the year 1820!

Convinced that we have said more on this humbling state of things, than in certain quarters is likely to be welcome, let us test the working of the New system for the last half-score years. The assertions which are industriously propagated of its prosperity for this given period, are calculated to mislead the uninformed. Minds of this

class will be led by such statements to believe, that the increase of the New Connexion consists of a multitude of persons who, by the application of its moral machinery on the "out-door population," have been converted from sin to holiness. But such a belief would not be in accordance with the facts of the case. This augmentation of numbers is partly out of the world, and partly out of other churches! The number of their circuits in Great Britain was, in 1824, *twenty-four*. It amounted, in 1834, to *thirty*, making for ten years an increase of *six*. Had not New Connexion Methodism in Scotland *expired* during the interval, this increase would have been a little larger. How have these additional circuits been formed? Some by the division of old ones, and the rest chiefly by the *dissentions* of other religious societies. Truro, Dawley Green, &c., have become circuits of the New Connexion, under circumstances which justify us in saying—"you reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye have entered into their labours." In some of their old circuits whose numbers stand higher in 1834 than they did in 1824, they have societies which their Conference never sent a Paul to plant, nor an Apollos to water. No. These societies through the influence of self-willed and unruly men, seceded from those pastors who, "in Christ Jesus had begotten them through the gospel." We wish this Christian community would henceforth cease to proselyte, and begin, in good earnest, to *evangelize* the neglected and the perishing.

We are fully aware of the existence of difficulties which are peculiar to its form of government in the way of carrying on any grand plans for the salvation of the lost. There was formed, some years since, by its Conference, a Home Missionary Society. Its designs were excellent. Its pecuniary supplies were ample. It was a great honour to the Connexion. Yet it *soon* disappeared. We are utterly at a loss to account for the extinction of this noble institution, except on one principle. Lay delegation, by its cold and narrow counsels, calculations, and jealousies, breathed a deadly influence over it. Notwithstanding this failure of the Missionary enterprise, it was felt that something of the kind must be a second time attempted. "The spirit of the age," of which the public, with great modesty, have been recently told they were in advance nearly half a century—had left them so far in the *rear*, in reference to Missionary efforts, it was agreed in 1825 to commence another mission. The Conference of the year just named decreed that, "Ireland shall be considered a Missionary station."

This law—to use the style we once heard of an Independent minister applying to it—"gave the old thing a new name." They had long possessed a few languishing societies in the sister country, and now some laudable efforts were put forth to multiply them. A degree of success has recompensed this pious toil. Still, in looking over the Minutes for 1834, we find cause to suspect that the mission to Ireland is not, in its results, altogether satisfactory. If the statements which, in regard to the moral wickedness of the Irish population, are made on platforms be worthy of credit, the New Connexion, as they are able, ought to be willing to increase their *seven* missionaries,* for Ireland's salvation. This good work the Minutes do not warrant us to expect. "The time is fully come" for their missionary activities on a more distant theatre. A committee is appointed "to look out" for some eligible station either in British North America, or the West India Islands. From what is known of the tactics of these Masters in Israel who are thus commissioned to the *watch*, we might say—though at the risk of being branded as the most uncharitable of men—what kind of events are almost sure to be designated "providential openings" for sending missionaries into distant lands—but, we forbear.

One † of their senior preachers made, on a late public occasion, a declaration which did not in the least surprise us. A declaration which, while, tacitly admits the want of satisfactory success, is important as expressing one of the principal reasons to which it is to be assigned. "As a body, we have depended too much on our system of church government, and depended too little on the influence of the Holy Spirit." We cannot better manifest our good will towards this section of the universal church, than by earnestly wishing that this candid confession of one of its aged ministers may be echoed by its members. Then there would, in all probability, commence such a *reform* among them as we shall be happy to witness. It is our decided conviction, that if they would abandon, at once and for ever, their discreditable policy of cherishing discord and rebellion among religious people, in order to fatten on the spoil—depend less on the reed of their ecclesiastical order, and more, in enlarged works of faith and labours of

* All their travelling preachers in Ireland are included in this small number.

† The Rev. W. Chapman, on laying the foundation stone of the new chapel, Chester.—Ed.

love, on the Spirit of the Lord of hosts, God would fulfil to their connexion, to an extent which he has not hitherto done, the word that he spake unto Abraham—"I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing."—EPSILON.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Association gravely advises us not to exult too much at the disgrace and rebuke which Dr. Warren and his coadjutors, have recently received for going to law with their brethren. This advice is altogether gratuitous. We are not accustomed to make "much ado about nothing." Conduct of this description we leave to be followed by the Association, who pride themselves in trying to agitate the connexion to its centre, for the sake of a few principles which they confess are not worth a rush! and who have been hallooing loud enough to make our heads ache for the last three months, when it now appears they are not half out of the wood! No; we scorn to imitate their "ineffable hypocrisy;" and important as the judgment of the Vice-Chancellor is, in its bearing on the constitution and discipline of "Methodism as it is," our well-timed exultation shall be as soberly exhibited, as our very disinterested (!) advisers could wish. In truth, we are too much grieved at what we hear and see around us, to exult in any thing at present, "save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." The prejudices of many honest, but fearfully mistaken, members of our society are yet strong in favour of a set of practical Antinomians who have too long *gulled* them by "the pomp and circumstance" of their flaming professions, and time must be afforded for these performers to *show themselves off* to the eyes of their infatuated admirers, in their true character, unprotected by the sanctity of office, and the consideration and respect of those who are in authority. Little indeed do these persons reflect on the damage which they have sustained in the loss of that tender regard of character, that jealous suspicion of tale-bearing, that frowning down of whispering and backbiting, which have been faithfully inculcated from the pulpits of this town, for so many years, by those who have ministered to us in "the word and doctrine." Evils of this nature have, unfortunately, served as a cover for many a deed which would not bear the light, and in a community too which insists, above all things, on the necessity of a walk suitable to the profession of godliness. Let these agitators know, that in their *new position*, they stand in a level with the rest of the world. Eyes which formerly, and perhaps culpably, too prone to be closed, are now no longer so; and let these men beware! For ourselves, we will judge nothing before the time: this we leave to Him who judgeth righteous judgment. We tender only a friendly hint to those who appear more ready to *give* than to *take* advice, and who shew by their conduct that they are much wiser than their teachers! But shall we conceal our satisfaction—our devout gratitude to God, at this new confirmation of the estimation which we have ever entertained of the *stability, purity, and safety* of Wesleyan Methodism? This would be "ineffable hypocrisy," indeed! We calmly and thankfully acknowledge this *fresh* attestation of the care of our "Great Builder," and still we sing with humble reliance on his direction—

"Fitly framed in Him we are,
All the building rises fair,
Let it to a temple rise,
Worthy Him who fills the skies."

He who runs his head against the adamant walls of this edifice will, he may depend upon it, only get a broken pate for his pains! This truth the Association faction are now discovering, to their great astonishment, and their faith is becoming more and more shaken, as to the virtue of the plasters applied by the *dear* Doctor and his assistants, Messrs. Farrer, Bcynon, Barnes, and Rowland, to the sore contusions and lacerations which they and their patients have inflicted on themselves, in a contest which is "most foul—strange and unnatural"!

We sincerely regret that—solely for want of room—we are unable to insert the *telling* letter of Mr. M. Gibson in this number. Whoever forwarded an account of the proceedings which took place when tickets were given to Mr. G.'s class, to the editor of that dark depôt of misrepresentation and slander, the *Lantern*, has—either through ignorance or something worse—mis-stated the whole affair. Words are said to have been uttered by a man of the name of Bew which never on that occasion fell from his lips. By the *Lantern's* own showing (No. 9,) these mis-statements are of very common occurrence, if we only take his "Notices to Correspondents" as speaking the truth. On these topics, we have determined to illuminate shortly. Really, if the editor and his correspondents have no regard to their character, we hope they will have some respect to the sacred cause of truth!

The communications from "Edward Jones,"—"Z,"—"Philaethes,"—and "Polycarp,"—shall all, if possible, have a place in our next number.

We have also received valuable articles from "An Observer,"—"Mentor,"—"Alpha,"—"An Old Methodist,"—"S. H. H.,"—"Delta,"—and "W. Davies."

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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REFLECTIONS ON THE ASSOCIATION.

"Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries; gird yourselves and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to naught: speak the word and it shall not stand; FOR GOD IS WITH US."—ISAIAH, viii. 9—10.

While certain members of this new body ecclesiastic are boldly advancing their avowed demonstrations, may we not be permitted, as humble sons and servants of our Wesleyan church, occasionally to record, on a subject so important to us, at least some dispassionate and cursory opinions? From the menacing position they have taken, it might seem that Methodism is all their own; and that their brethren of the same communion must not dispute one inch of the ground which the Associates have professed to occupy; but strike at once to their supreme authority, and the giant power of their unrivalled argumentation. Discussion they must therefore deem to be absolutely useless; and when, some time ago, they called loudly for public opportunities of contesting the debated points, it must of course have been with the full conviction, that their puny opponents would instantly consign themselves to the infamy of a defeated resistance; the doctrines of the Association being, in the judgment of the party, just as perfectly indisputable as those of Euclid, and of the great Sir Isaac Newton. Read their writings—listen to the tone of their measureless asseverations, and you will perceive their belief, that they have only to give universal announcement to their grand discoveries, and every man in England, possessed of common sense and common honesty, must yield his conviction in a moment to this unequalled burst of public virtue, truth, and talent. We must be content, however, to be odious exceptions in this case; still, we are not disposed to shrink from the task of expressing what, no doubt, will be deemed our very contumacious opinions on this subject. If sometimes we repeat, in part, what we have before observed, it will be because we judge the matter is important, and because we believe it has not yet received a satisfactory reply.

In the *first place*, we ask, by what means has this Association sprung into existence? How did it assume a distinctive character and form? We will not inquire if its members consulted the opinions and sought the consent of their ministers? For these were deemed undeserving of any deference or courtesy in regard to the project; or dolts and dunces; or selfish and servile; or tyrants and cowards; quite unfit to be talked

to on any question of the kind. They were, indeed, the grand objects of assault, and any warning of what was about to be concocted, would not have squared with the purposed exposure of such men to public execration.

We merely ask, did these Associates deliberate with their brethren, the official members of the laity, before they assumed this power? No; they had no great liking, we presume, for a committee of the whole house, but claiming the authority to *form themselves* into a committee, they retired from the public arena of affairs; and, returning from their secrecy, presented their report on very grave subjects, questions quite unmooted by their brethren, and thereby with a gravity most marvellous, proclaimed their own despotism. And thus we have a junto of dictators lustily denouncing tyranny, yet attempting to force their lay companions throughout the connexion, into measures not at all congenial with the views of the great body of the people. Nay, the people—yes, we say the people—still continue to reject, either by their decided declarations, or their tacit acknowledgements, those measures as destructive, they conceive, to the inestimable Methodism which they hoped to enjoy without the interference of such unauthorised assailants.

We say their brethren of the laity; for though the designed effect of the Association is, no doubt, chiefly directed against the Conference, yet the evil, we contend, would not rest here! It must finally crash upon the heads of the Wesleyan people at large. “Oh! but you mistake; the changes we demand are for the benefit of the people.” It is sufficient for this part of our argument, that the people do not think so; and so long as they continue in that mind, should the other party (to suppose a thing impossible), still fight and prevail, the very contest itself, to say nothing of the intended measures, would be ruinous to the spiritual, and, by consequence, to the temporal interests of multitudes; who, notwithstanding our alleged pernicious and intolerable corruptions, have long continued happy and prosperous in the enjoyment of genuine piety. Whatever may be said of those measures, we deem the commencement of this menacing confederacy an insult to the entire brotherhood of the Wesleyan connexion. What should be thought, if in a dissenting congregation, some few persons fancying, or even knowing their church to be corrupt, should secretly form themselves into a coercive committee to effect a remedy, without consulting either their pastor or their brethren? By what law, either statute or common, in the government of Methodism, have the Associates assumed this power? Law! “they are a law unto themselves.” It is not indeed rebellion of the same character; but the Association is no more countenanced by any positive rules in the system of Methodism, than the mutiny at the Nore was sanctioned by the laws of the land. How then was the Association formed? We answer—by gross misrepresentations of the points at issue, especially of the preachers as a body of Christian ministers. Many of these misrepresentations we have already pointed out and confuted. If, for instance, presenting blank papers to the poor people for signatures, which afterwards should constitute them members of the Association; if various incorrect statements, prejudicial to the character of the preachers; and if, at the same time, assurances seriously given, that the opposition is intended to shew *great love* to the preachers, to starve and humble them for the good of their souls; and many other winning methods of address; if these, we observe, be honourable methods of enlisting partisans to this new fraternity, we confess

ourselves unable to trace out any clear distinction between what is proper and what is improper.

We inquire, in the *second place*, whether this new company was not formed in direct opposition to existing rules—rules sufficiently plain and positive to regulate the conduct of all unbiassed persons, who love a Christian and frank impartiality, and hate the trickery which catches at a plan to serve a purpose.

The rule itself we have quoted on a former occasion. We then showed that the question, or preamble, by which the rule is introduced, proves it to be applicable to all such meetings as those of the Association.

The expression, "*we think*," has been strangely interpreted to imply, that though the Conference thus expresses an opinion on the subject of such meetings, leave is given to the people to think just the contrary, if they please, and to act accordingly. In this case the passage would contain no rule at all, or rather it would be a full permission to any members of the society to hold any meeting at any time, in any place, on any subject they thought proper; which, we scarcely need to observe, would be destructive of all rule and government, in any conventional community whatever. On this point the Association reminds us of the boy, who, being asked by his father if he would go to church, fancied, from this optional form of expression, that he might do as he thought proper, and refused; till he found the words were not intended to convey this meaning, when he yielded without objection to paternal authority. Had no rule at all, indeed, been found in Methodism, opposed to the Association, one would think it almost impossible that rational and pious men could fail to discover, as by intuition, the absurdity and perniciousness of such combinations. It is said there is no law against blanket-stealing. Should the opportunity, however, be presented, we trust our good old friends of the Association would pause a little and consider what would be the opinion of the judges in this case. For our own part, we hold it as our firm conviction, that if ever there was disobedience in domestic life, or schism in a church, or rebellion in a state, this coercive opposition must rank among these evils, as founded more or less upon their principles, and animated by their spirit.

Our opponents think themselves justified in their hostility, even in the teeth of rule and order; first—because of the magnitude of our corruptions as a body; and, secondly—because, as they affirm, they are not allowed freedom of discussion, and access by appeal to the Conference. But what are those corruptions—who has interfered with their spiritual privileges, or in any wise attempted to hinder their growth in grace, or their usefulness? If the burden was so intolerable, why did they not cry out, and shew their bleeding shoulders long ago? That some few persons did this, fancying themselves aggrieved, and even agonized, by terrible oppressions, we all know. So far they claimed our pity as great sufferers, for imaginary pain is real pain. But that all this was fictitious is evident from this, that multitudes of those who have lately joined them were then quite happy and contented, though actually bearing the same burdens with the others. But now the genius of the Association has let fall the healing drops of her inestimable magic on their distorted vision, and they are enlightened all at once. We verily believe that the great majority of the members of the Association were perfectly satisfied with the connexion, till, since last Conference, certain individuals seduced them from their due regard, not only to the preachers—their legitimate

instructors; but also to all persons in the body, however numerous and respectable, who should differ in opinion from those new doctors in the canon law of Methodism. And with regard to the complaint, that no freedom of discussion is permitted in the body, nothing can be more incorrectly affirmed. Discussion, in the several meetings of the people, has always been allowed; only, it is reasonable to suppose that this must have its limits. To allow any subject, however revolutionary—however obviously out of the proper business of such meetings—however hostile, for instance, to the doctrines preached in the body; would be altogether wrong on the part of the minister. He must determine, taking counsel with his brethren and other friends, as his prudence shall dictate to him, what, and how far, any given point shall be the subject of inquiry or debate at these meetings. If he should be guilty of indiscretion, either on the one side or the other, he is amenable to the district meeting and the Conference. To say that no member of quarterly or leaders' meetings would, of course, propose an improper subject of debate; and that the meeting should itself force its own measures on the official consideration of the preacher, is a manifest begging of the question; and to affirm that it is of no manner of use to charge a preacher in this case before his brethren because they are all corrupt together, is so false and impudent a slander, as to merit no reply.

Thirdly, we ask, what are the objects of the Association? These must reflect much light on its character. "By their fruits ye shall know them." They are of two sorts: the ultimate designs included in the revolution of the system which they call reform—the introduction of lay delegates, and of the public itself into Conference—and of other matters with which most probably the reader is acquainted; and the means they have chosen to effect these purposes. As, at present, we confine ourselves chiefly to the Association itself, it is not our intention to touch the former class of topics. That has been done by Messrs. VEVERS, CROWTHER, and CUBITT, and lately by the judgment of both Chancellors, we think, with the spear of Ithuriel; to say nothing of our own former papers on the subject. What, then, are the means employed to carry these designs into accomplishment? Hear it, ye sons of freedom! Is it calm and courteous appeal? Is it argument? Is it the friendly debate which Christian charity inspires? Is it the constitutional and common method, in this land of liberty, by which public questions are debated and agreed upon; and which combines sufficient independence and firmness of thinking, with the rejection of all claim to infallibility, and the admission that the truth may possibly be found on the other side? Is it the dignified example of peaceable separation from a body of men monstrosously, incorrigibly corrupt! No—gentle reader. It is agitation—it is force—it is starvation—and a pertinacious adherence to the system, with a view to perplex and rend it, under the sanctimonious name of Christian reform. All this is very kind. But in the mean while, those profound menders of systems do not seem to be aware of the manifest impolicy and futility of the scheme, as tending to destroy itself. They have not an eye to see the reaction it produces on the sound part of the connexion, who seem resolved to support the whole of their valued institutions with more than their former zeal and liberality. They seem insensible to this, that if the Contingent Fund, for example, and other funds amongst us, were destroyed, the consequence would be, not the starvation of the preachers; but the narrowing of our plans according to

our means; the refusal to take out more preachers than the people could or would support, and, by consequence, the souls of multitudes, quite innocent of the corruptions referred to, would be the chief sufferers beneath the blows of this new enginery, to force people to be virtuous. The same might be said of the missionary establishment. And suppose this force could succeed in producing a change of opinions in the Conference, what would be the value of those opinions? What, even in the estimation of the fathers of this reform, would be the moral character of the Conference? The Conference has already, we are told, "sealed its own disgrace by its public declaration;" but surely the turning round at the mere command of the Association, and merely for a "piece of bread," would doubly seal that infamy. As to the missions, we indignantly deny the charge of an improper use of its funds; and where, on the one side, mere affirmation is advanced, the laws of reasoning require nothing more than a negative reply. But should we, for the sake of argument, admit the charge, it would not follow that measures ought to be resorted to, which would issue in the damnation of thousands of unhappy pagans. And if all terrestrial institutions with which any fault can be found, ought to be instantly and entirely deprived of support, we should like to know how many would remain to adorn the Christian and civilized world?

In the *fourth place*, we ask, who are the persons that compose the Association? They cannot say the question is invidious, because they have asserted their own respectability, and high character in other respects, with no small self-congratulation. Whatever individual exceptions may be pointed out, we honestly believe, and this belief is founded, not on general testimony alone, but on some knowledge of the subject, that in the main, when compared with the connexion at large, they are not the most experienced, or elderly, or intelligent, or spiritual. Nor are they, by any means, the most respectable and wealthy, and, hence, it is a favourite topic with them to declaim against the rich. To "speak evil of dignities," is in the very spirit of their institution. Whether this arise from the insidiousness of an envious disposition, or from higher motives, they most determine for themselves. Nor are they, by any means, the largest in regard to numbers. Out of 400 circuits, we question whether there be 50 agitated at all. The Associates, in Liverpool, are not 1000 strong; while about 3000 still remain in the society. If the whole of the discontented party amount, as they affirm, to 40,000 which, we feel confident, is vastly overrated, still the connexion numbers more than 200,000 on the contrary side. Nor do they seem disposed, after looking at the question for nearly six months, to be convinced by the bold and numerous appeals of the Association. "True; but things will turn round, and we shall conquer in the end." We have no doubt you think so. The followers of Johanna Southcote believed, for many years after her death, that the child would come notwithstanding, from some quarter or another; and among them were some sensible men—yes, and clergymen of the church of England!

But then, it will be said, "what has all this to do with truth?"—We reply, "much every way." For though neither character nor numbers can determine truth, they are allowed in all countries to be, generally, a sign of truth; and hence the most important affairs in civilized society are settled by the number of voices—and we have reason to know that members of the Association, in some instances, set no small value on majorities.

But this point is of considerable importance in the case of many persons who—from their circumstances, their deficient information, and other disabilities—are perfectly incompetent to judge of certain questions in church government, and who, in some instances, have the candour to acknowledge this. Such persons must be guided by some authority.—Pray, which authority is preferable—the Association, or the whole body of the people, with all their intelligence, piety, and respectability, leaving the preachers entirely out of question? Yet, we see no reason why a poor man should not rather be directed in his judgment by the ministers who, under God, have been the means of saving his soul, and whose habits and abilities, we presume, have enabled them to judge of such affairs, than by the members of the Association. For in what respects are these members better qualified to judge? But, perhaps, it will be said—they do not pretend to superior powers of judgment, but deem that the preachers are not *morally* so qualified to judge as themselves. Then the preachers, it would seem, are consciously vicious, and sin against their better judgment, which is the reason, we suppose, they are called tyrants and oppressors—for mere mistake would not justify the use of such language; and in all this, it would appear, the people join the preachers to support a system of palpable wickedness. These are very modest allegations brought against a body of ministers and people, to whom the members of the Association have long professed to listen with much satisfaction and improvement, and with whom they have seemed to enjoy the most friendly communion, without ever naming those charges to the parties themselves.

(To be continued in our next number.)

THE NEW CONNEXION AND ITS PROFESSED BALANCE OF POWER BETWEEN THE PREACHERS AND THE PEOPLE.

“Prove all things.”—ST. PAUL.

The providence of God is particularly over good men. We believe it specially presided over the mind of the venerable Wesley when he drew up the celebrated “Deed of Declaration,” by which lay delegation is legally excluded the Conference as long as Methodism endures. We will give only one reason at present for our position. By excluding lay delegation from the Conference, he prevented the people from obtaining that overwhelming power which would have so prostrated the sacred office of the ministry in the dust, and so secularized the spiritual institutions of the body, as to have made them all comparatively inefficient. We admit the New Connexion professes to have escaped this serious evil by framing a constitution which secures a balance of power between the preachers and the people. But this profession, like too many other professions, is not in strict accordance with the real state of the case. Where shall we seek and find in that community this equality of power? Is it in the circuits? Have the preachers in all meetings an equal degree of authority with the people? The general rules, which we have carefully perused, reply in the negative. These provide that admissions and expulsions—nominations and appointments, &c. shall be decided, *by the majorities of laymen*. The preachers may give advice, and say whether the *ayes*, or the *noes* have the question at issue; but beyond this kind of interference, they seem to be powerless. Again—Is this balance of power in the Conference? When we see a preacher and a layman go from each circuit to Conference, we are free to confess there is apparent equality in the

formation of this legislative assembly. If, however, this equality be fairly examined, it will be found to exist far more in appearance than in reality. THE RIGHT OF CONFERENCE TO LEGISLATE IS LIMITED TO MATTERS OF MINOR IMPORTANCE. If, at the next Conference, some of the preachers, from a conviction that, at the commencement of the connexion, a small number of their predecessors in the ministry, under highly excited feelings, when they knew not what they did, conceded an almost unlimited power to the people, were to bring in a Reform bill which would restore to them and their brethren some portion of their lost authority, the Conference, however willing, *could not* make it the law of the connexion. The bill would have to stand over for one year, that it might be referred to the people. To prove that we are not unauthorised in our statement we quote the law: "No fundamental law to be altered or repealed by the Conference, without first consulting the quarterly meetings." It is easy to foresee, without the gift of prophesy, what would be the fate of the bill in these circuit meetings. Overwhelming majorities of the laity, who, it must be remembered, would be almost *the only voters*, would "throw it out." Not only would they reject the measure; but, most probably, take plans to make the following Conference an assembly of *anti-reformers*! and this might be done constitutionally! Power is so *balanced* that every *reforming* superintendent might be kept at home during the Conference! Superintendents in this connexion are not members of Conference *ex-officio*. In a truly balanced state of things, it is evident they ought to be. Each circuit has the right to elect a lay delegate; and also to appoint a preacher; and if a preacher were to go to Conference without "a copy of his appointment to attend," its doors would be closed against him! It is, therefore, utterly impossible for ministers to carry, under this system, any reform in favour of themselves.

We will now shew our readers the limited right of the Conference to legislate from some historical occurrences. A few of the preachers who had grown old and infirm in the work of the ministry, in consequence, were obliged to become supernumeraries; desired, whenever it might be convenient, to attend the Conference; and they were perfectly willing to submit to any restrictions which a jealousy for equality might impose. This most natural and commendable desire was brought before the Conference of 1825, when the following resolution was proposed in order to grant their prayer. It reads as follows: "*That superannuated preachers, having travelled twenty years in full connexion, shall be eligible to a seat in Conference; but they shall bear their own travelling expenses. Nevertheless, such preachers shall have no vote in Conference.*" Even this small boon to the hoary-headed ministers of the body, the Conference had not the power to bestow! The resolution could not become *law* unless the quarterly meetings consented! It was accordingly submitted to their consideration. What was the result?—REJECTION. We read, to the great *honour* of the connexion, in the minutes of 1826—"The Conference is of opinion that it will best perform its duty, by not coming to any determination relative to their admission into Conference." If our readers will examine the minutes from the year just named, they will find that the Conference has not yet been able to determine on their admission!

We judge that we have sufficiently proved that the New system's professed balance of power, is without foundation. The laity have both *in* and *out* of Conference a great preponderance of authority;—a fact to

which the slow progress which the New Connexion has made must be attributed. Nevertheless, there are persons who, in speeches and letters, laud the system, and recommend it to all that are called Methodists. It is denominated *British, reasonable, and scriptural*! The old system, it is said, suited a darker age; but it will not suit the present enlightened generation. "It is *un-British, unreasonable, and unscriptural*." Standing in the consciousness of the inappropriateness of these thundering epithets to the Wesleyan polity, we hurl them back upon the New system. We say *it* is "un-British." It is far from being in unbroken harmony with the constitution of this happy land! Is it British that nearly all legislative power should be in the hands of the people? Is it British that in all courts out of Conference the same men should be *both judge and jury*? Again—we say it is "unreasonable." There ought to be government in a family. But are the *children* to rule? Reason dictates that *parents* "rule well their own house." And are not ministers fathers in the church? As such, it is reasonable for them to "take the oversight thereof, willingly." And again—we say *it* is "unscriptural." Let the preachers of the New Connexion read St. Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus, with a *reference* to the form of government with which they are associated. Having perused them ourselves, the impression left on our minds is, that a "most arbitrary and tyrannical" encroachment has been made on the rights of the pastoral office! Certain duties of high import are required of ministers which are not enjoined upon the laity; and there are certain rights which ministers ought to possess in order to their fulfilment. But these rights lay delegation has, in a great measure taken away; as Sampson, by the Philistines, was "shorn of his strength."

It is, nevertheless said, that the preachers of the New Connexion are contented and happy! "How can these things be?" Can a ministry oppressed with the *incubus* of lay domination be comfortable? How is it that so many *happy and contented* preachers have forsaken the connexion, since it was first established? *Many* have been called out into its ministry; but *few*, comparatively speaking, have persevered in it. Some have become ministers of other religious communities; and others have "entangled themselves with the affairs of this life." The aristocracy, or, more properly, the oligarchy, of the New Connexion—we mean a small number of individuals who, from year to year, are to be found ruling in the "high places" of the body, are aware that these facts do not indicate a pleasant ministerial condition. A committee, consisting of *five* laymen and *two* preachers (another instance of *balanced* power), was appointed by the last Conference to draw up a "plan for the improvement of the junior preachers." We have seen a printed circular which this committee have addressed to their friends. They have agreed to have an Institution; and that every student who enters it shall engage that he will never leave the New Connexion itinerancy, without refunding the outlay of money on his academical education! Why have this committee proposed so strange a regulation? They know that educated, talented preachers will be exposed to strong temptations to abandon a ministry, which they will find repressed in all its energies by the SOVEREIGNTY OF LAY DELEGATION!

The Wesleyan connexion is truly happy in having been saved from all the evils of lay delegation in Conference. Multitudes of our most excellent and influential people are satisfied with "Methodism as it is." They can reverberate the sentiment so nobly put forth in a declaration on

the cover of the *Methodist Magazine* for March, signed by nearly one hundred officers, whose residence in Staffordshire Potteries, where the New system has long had its most powerful settlement, entitles their testimony to very considerable regard. "FOR LAY DELEGATION, SO WARMLY EULOGISED AND EARNESTLY RECOMMENDED BY SOME AS THE SOVEREIGN REMEDY FOR EVERY ABUSE, AND THE CORRECTION OF EVERY EVIL, WE HAVE NO WISH; AND HAVING CAREFULLY MARKED ITS OPERATION ON OTHER RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES, AND CALCULATED ITS PROBABLE INFLUENCE UPON OUR OWN, WE WISH FOR OURSELVES TO REMAIN EXEMPT FROM ITS SUPPOSED ADVANTAGES."

EPSILON.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—May I beg the favour of a few *rays* from a source which will illustrate, and place in a clearer light than it at present stands, a circumstance in connexion with a statement which appeared in a late number of the *Christian Advocate*, relative to the proceedings of a meeting of the "Wesleyan Methodist Association," in Liverpool, and by which an impression which might otherwise obtain pretty generally, may be corrected. This, I opine, might be best subserved in your valuable and popular paper, provided you will oblige me with a corner for that purpose. I would charitably hope, that part of the statement to which I shall presently allude, must have owed its introduction to one of those accidents which attend upon and interlace themselves with all human doings, be they conducted with ever so much perspicuity and prudence—or that it was the effect of mere inadvertency. I am inclined to select the one alternative; for to suppose the existence of *design*, rather than to view the publication as an adventitious circumstance, would be to offer an easy transition from the fact to the *data* upon which these calculations might reasonably be imagined to rest, which number not only "the thousands of our Judah," but "the tens of thousands of our Israel," as in firm and fast alliance with the individuals and objects of that Association. This, indeed, would be, Sir, to bolster up a cause by means which would not only defeat its own proposed achievements, and eventually effectuate its certain overthrow, but would serve at no very distant day to enshrine its very memory, "the pressure from without" would soon be found to bear too hard upon its internal strength and structure, and to peril its very existence.

From the report of the proceedings above adverted to, we gather that "a meeting of the members and friends of the Wesleyan Methodist Association was held in the Music Hall, Bold-street, Liverpool, for the purpose of receiving a report of the proceedings and state of the Association, and transacting other business connected with it;" after the usual preliminaries had been adjusted and disposed of, "one of the secretaries," we are told, "was called upon by the chairman to read the report of the committee." Among the various topics of that report, we find—"Resolutions demanding redress of grievances, had been passed"—observe the phraseology, sir—"HAD BEEN PASSED at the following quarterly meetings," enumerating them. It was with no little astonishment—glancing, curiously, yet carelessly, over the list of those heroic cantons of the Methodist commonwealth which, under the federal auspices of that grand legislative and executive body, "the Wesleyan Methodist Association," had determined "to brave the battle and the breeze," in resistance of the "usurpation," "priestly tyranny," "undue domination," and "despotism" of the members of the Wesleyan senate—the Conference; and who had nobly dared to uplift and unfurl the oriflamme of liberty, not having before their eyes, their hearts nothing daunted, any fear of ecclesiastical premunire, excommunicatory anathemas, &c., which might be hurled at them, by "the rulers in high places,"—the name of a circuit, dear and interesting to me from many considerations, that of the "*Manchester Fourth*." Sir, I confess to you, that my first feeling was one of honest indignation at this impeachment of the loyalty and attachment of our circuit, through its accredited organ, the quarterly meeting, to the constitutional principles and discipline of Methodism, as administered by the Conference; and in the next place, Sir, I felt ashamed, for the first time, of the Fourth Manchester circuit—not of the circuit, morally and abstractedly considered, but to find it linked in and peering out from among such bad company; and at once

determined, (under your favour, Sir,) without prejudice to better advocates, whom the occasion might probably call up, to free it from the imputation—the unjust imputation under which, collaterally at least, it lay, from its location among those circuits which had “*passed*” resolutions at their quarterly meetings, “demanding a redress of grievances.” Having the honour—and a high honour I esteem it to be, Sir—to be officially connected with the largest society in that circuit, I felt as I ought to feel, jealous for the honour and reputation of it; being well assured that the societies of which the circuit is composed, *generally*, during this period of excitement, have no sympathy with those who, unmindful of the directions of our immortal founder, are endeavouring “to mend his rules,” rather than “to *keep* them.” Vain attempt! though, no doubt, “they be the men” with whom “wisdom shall die.” “*Passed*” were they—these resolutions? Aye, Sir, but as “an untimely birth which never saw the sun;” one small adjunct to the word would have set the matter upon a right basis—they *were* “*passed*,” Sir, but *they were passed by an act of preterition.*

A word or two as to the facts of the case. At a late quarterly meeting, after the excellent superintendent of the circuit, the Rev. Joseph Hollingworth, had enquired from the stewards whether they had any other business to bring before them, and was answered in the negative, intending to close the meeting, he gave out the first line of the doxology, “Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,” when he was interrupted by one of the leaders of the Bridgewater-street society rising, and stating that he had “some resolutions which he wished to read to the meeting.” Mr. Hollingworth very promptly and judiciously cut his speech short by enquiring from him whether he were a member of “the Association.” To this he did not reply, but said again he wished “to read the resolutions.” Mr. H. then told him he required an answer to his question before he suffered him to introduce any resolutions to that meeting. The individual, however, still persisted in endeavouring to obtrude himself on the meeting, claiming his right to do so, and by an evasive answer to avoid the drift of the inquiry—Mr. H. as resolutely reiterating his question, in which he was *supported by the great body of the meeting.* The course which the affair was now taking evidently chagrined the projectors and partizans of this notable scheme; and one of them was so exasperated at the failure which his friend was likely to make of this whole joint-stock business, that he became absolutely frantic with rage, and clamoured most vociferously for a hearing. This, however, was denied them, for the very obvious reason above noticed; and the superintendent leaving the chair, the meeting was dissolved. Not content, however, with this procedure, one of the party—seven or eight of whom constituted this inconsiderable opposition—moved that a certain brother should “take the chair;” but here a second difficulty was interposed, by the stewards politely informing them that they should not have the room in which they were then assembled, for any such purpose.—An adjournment to the chapel-yard was recommended to them, which suggestion they signified their intention to profit by; but “discretion” being judged, most probably, in this instance also, “as the better part of valour,” this was subsequently abandoned; and it must have been that “resolutions demanding a redress of grievances, &c. were passed”—if passed at all—at a “quarterly meeting” of *their own.* I may be allowed here to add, that to *my own knowledge*, had not the introduction of these resolutions been anticipated so summarily as they were, an amendment, deprecatory of the proceedings of the “Wesleyan Methodist Association,” and declaratory of the confidence and affection of the meeting to the Conference and constituted order of Methodism was intended to be proposed, and would have been carried by an overwhelming majority!

I should judge, Sir, that the secretaries of the Branch Association in Liverpool, being honourable men, would be glad to have an opportunity of amending their report and of revoking a misrepresentation to which they were not, I am ready to believe, wittingly and voluntarily committed. Estimating them both from the slight knowledge which I have of one of them, I conclude that some less worthy individuals have palmed upon them a surreptitious record of a fact, the counterpart of which has, in reality, neither identity nor existence. Perhaps, “the wish has been father to the thought” with those who have thus interpolated, mediately, the name of the “Manchester Fourth” circuit. Be that as it may, if I should not be thought presumptuous by those gentlemen, whom I can have no reason wantonly to seek to offend, and from whom, could I contemplate such a case, I should be very sorry to shield myself under an anonymous signature, in any animadversions they might think proper to make upon me; I would respectfully recommend them to receive reports such as I have had to comment upon above with extreme chariness, if they would wish to escape imposition, and the possibility of any conjecture that they might be accessory to the promulgation of

information which may be transmitted to them, through vehicles of communication which justly render such communications liable to suspicion.—“*Fas ab hoste doceri.*”*
Z.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—It was with as much surprise as pain that I read in a late number of the *Christian Advocate* a letter, signed by Mr. James Russell, a local preacher in the Wrexham circuit. If Mr. Russell dreamt that the *Christian Advocate* never fell into the hands of any but those who wink at the violation of truth, or if he imagined that the specific paper in which that letter is inserted would fortunately escape the notice of those who might possess, at least, as intimate an acquaintance with the nature and circumstances of the subjects upon which he so confidently writes as himself, then it would have been less strange that he should have so directly violated the great principles of Christian charity and truth, as it is evident he has done in that anti-Christian letter.—But, sir, fortunately for the cause of truth and for those whose characters he has so unsparingly traduced, it is not so. As I, perhaps, am as well acquainted with the circumstances of the various cases he has presented to the world as he may be, I feel it to be my duty to show to the public how far his statements are correct, and can be borne out by fact.

His first grand thrust is made at the character of the superintendent of the Wrexham circuit, the Rev. Jos. Griffith—against whom he brings several charges. The first is that he refused to read, publicly, the paper relative to the re-opening of the chapel at Cefn Mawr; this statement is correct—for which refusal the following reasons may be assigned:—1st, Mr. Russell had engaged Dr. Warren and Mr. David Rowland to preach at the above place, (being in the Wrexham circuit,) without having at all consulted Mr. Griffith, as superintendent of that circuit, which was a direct violation of one of the most explicit laws of Methodism; 2nd—neither Dr. Warren nor Mr. Rowland was eligible to preach in any Methodist chapel: the one having been suspended, and the other expelled from society. Now, had Mr. G. published the re-opening of the above chapel, under such circumstances, would he not have subjected himself to the just rebuke of the Conference? But, in the second place, he charges Mr. Griffith with having basely reflected upon the character of Dr. Warren. As for myself, I never heard a word fall from his lips which at all reflected upon the character of the Doctor; and, by the authority of that experienced and peaceable minister of Jesus Christ, I presume to ask Mr. Russell for the proof of a single instance wherein he has, in that way, debased himself; and until he can prove such an instance, will he not be esteemed by the world as a vile slanderer? But again: he asserts that at the Wrexham December quarterly meeting, when he attempted to introduce the subject of the present agitated state of the connexion, the superintendent, after having expressed his determination not to suffer the discussion of that subject in that meeting, exclaimed—“I’ll give you my opinion, but I’ll not have yours.” Now, sir, I was in that meeting from its commencement to its conclusion: I have also spoken to several of my brethren who were there also—and they, with myself, unhesitatingly and solemnly declare that no such words were uttered by Mr. Griffith, in that meeting, nor any which could possibly bear that construction; therefore, as a palpable falsehood, with all the reprobation which it merits, we hurl it back upon its author. And in reference to his assertion that the above meeting was closed by Mr. Griffith in a most unbecoming spirit, while I allow that he might have been troubled and even agitated, I contend that he did not manifest a spirit at all unbecoming a Christian minister. Therefore, hoping that what I have said in answer to Mr. Russell’s charges will be sufficient in the estimation of the public to rescue the character of our much esteemed pastor from that disgrace to which such a foul attempt has been made to consign it, I proceed by observing that Mr. Russell has, in his memorable letter, represented one of our leaders as preaching the doctrine of human infallibility. He says—“One leader told me, a short time ago, that the preachers were infallible—that they were incapable of doing wrong.” The gentleman to whom he thus refers I know well; and whose unblemished character, cheerful liberality, and devotedness to the cause of Christ, entitle him to the respect and esteem of all our societies. I waited upon him a few days ago, when he solemnly

* It is but fair to state that in the Notices to Correspondents of *Lantern*, No. 8, we are told that the words “had been passed” should have been printed, “had been proposed,” in reference to the case about which our respectable correspondent complains. This considerably alters the case. To propose a resolution, and to pass a resolution are widely different affairs. We should wish to know how many other circuits have been served in the same manner by our benighted contemporary. We hope the Editors of the *Lantern* will profit by the above advice. It is painful to be under the necessity, again and again, of exposing the gross mis-statements, to say nothing, at present, of the falsehoods with which that publication has recently abounded.—ED.

declared that he never said any such thing, which I confidently believe. And in reference to Mr. Russell's insulting assertion, that those of his brethren who refuse to engage in his wild proceedings are as much under the influence of the preachers as any Papist he ever met with—if he means to say that they are as much under the influence of the preachers as the illiterate laity of the Romish church are under the influence of their priests, I take this opportunity of assuring him that he is much mistaken in his opinion of them, and cannot but express my surprise that he, as a local preacher, should make such a foul attempt to stigmatise their character.

But one more remark, sir, and I have done. According to Mr. Russell's own account the subject of dispute between the Conference and the Association, was not even discussed at the Wrexham December quarterly meeting, which is correct. But on the first page of the *Watchman's Lantern*, for January 28, we are told that at a meeting of the friends of the Association, held on the 22d of that month, in the Music Hall, Bold-street, Liverpool, it was publicly declared, that resolutions, demanding redress of grievances were actually proposed, read, and passed by that meeting. Now, sir, these things need no comment—they loudly speak for themselves; and, of themselves, hold out an answer to the following question:—Are these men fit to reform or govern the Church of Christ? Leaving you to think and speak of them just as you think proper, I conclude by assuring Mr. Russell, that unless he is in future more careful in his assertions, and sparing in his reflections upon the characters of his brethren, he must expect the development of something which will prove as surprising to his ears, and as grateful to his feelings, as the ignition and explosion of the sulphureous fire-damp of a Cefn-mawr coal-pit, would be to the eyes and feelings of an operative collier, employed in those subterranean regions.—I am, Dear Sir,

Yours respectfully,

EDWARD JONES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—Your kindness in inserting my last is an inducement for me to trouble you again, especially as, I think, a statement made in the *Lantern* demands a reply.—It is stated that the Conference had departed from the example of Mr. Wesley, in the examination of candidates for the ministry, by insisting upon a belief in the “eternal sonship of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Those who are acquainted with the history of Methodism; and certainly none but such, and not even all those, should set themselves up to reform the constitution; those, I say, will be aware of the fact, that if the question was not proposed in its present form, one *was* proposed which involved it: viz.—Have you read, and do you believe, Mr. Wesley's first four volumes of sermons, and his Notes on the New Testament. Now the above mentioned doctrine is most expressly laid down in those works. And according to the old axiom, “the whole is equal to the sum of all its parts,” which, by the bye, the Editor of the *Lantern* seems to have forgotten (if he ever learnt it); when a man believes the whole of what is contained in a book, he certainly believes each particular.

“’Tis strange, passing strange,” to observe how a kind of infatuation—a love for change, cloaked under the imposing name of Reform (and no matter be the change from good to bad) has taken possession of these individuals, though we may believe the great mass of the faction are led on—they know not why or wherefore. Their credulity has been imposed upon by a few designing men, always ready for change, and who would fain have them to believe they are deprived of their lawful rights! I myself have had occasion to be acquainted with some of the leaders of the opposition; and believe, that if peace were once more established amongst us, she would not long be allowed to maintain her seat, whilst certain characters remain with us.

I have heard one—one who can *try* to be eloquent upon a platform—one who is distinguished by longer legs and less sense than his neighbours—one who is “consummately” vain of his own productions, and one who has “a name and local habitation” not fifty miles from Great Ancoats-street, Manchester; I have heard this man declare, and this publicly, that he will never rest until lay delegation is established, and every member has a voice in the election of those delegates; and, after a few sentences, he declared he should be content if local preachers and leaders had a voice—and they only. Perhaps, it may be said, he might then see the subject in another light. Admitting that—what dependence can be placed upon a man who so soon finds reason to change his opinion? Or, does it speak much for his having considered, and weighed well the circumstances of the case, before he came there in public to deliver two such contradictory statements?—Certainly not. Instances of this kind might be multiplied; but the above is sufficient to show whom we have to deal with.

PHILALETHES.

THE ASSOCIATION—SOLOMON—AND MR. JOHN WHITTINGHAM.

"We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, viewing with dismay, the continued determination of the Conference to exercise an absolute sway over the people—and fearing that if that body longer pursue such a career, no honest and upright man can remain connected with them,—do, in the fear of God, form ourselves into a Grand Central Association, for the following purposes:—1st, To obtain from the Conference a disavowal of powers exercised." We want "a share in the government."—*J. Gordon's Speech at the Music Hall, Liverpool.*

"We agree that until the Conference grant these our reasonable requests, we will withhold our contributions from the Missionary, Contingent, Chapel, and all funds whatsoever which are under its control."—*Resolutions signed by 54 Official Members in Liverpool, at a meeting, held Nov. 10, 1834.*

It would seem as if the members of the Association were not all Solomons, as they differ a little from the judgment of that wise man, on more points than one. It was his opinion, that when a claim to govern a child, as its true parent, is connected with a proposition to destroy it with a sword, the claim is completely invalidated by that circumstance, and ought, on that account, to be rejected. When a woman appeared before the king, requesting to be constituted sole guardian of an infant, which, she said, was her own son, and at the same time, in order to settle a dispute between herself and another, who made the same demand on the same ground, went on to say, "let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it,"—[1 Kings, iii. 26.]—the judge thought her *proposition* disproved her *claim*, and constituted a reason why it ought not to be allowed. But the Association, it seems, are not exactly of the same opinion. In the first place, they say, we want "a share in the government," which is a modest way of saying, they want Methodism to be placed substantially under their controul. Then they propose to deal with some of its most vital and important institutions in the following way:—

"We will withhold our contributions from the Missionary, Contingent, Chapel, and all other funds whatsoever, which are under the control" of Conference.—Not only so; but they go on to provide for "posting," "printing," "deputations," and what not, in order to bring other people generally to adopt the same resolution. Here hundreds of missionaries, embarrassed trustees, widows, and orphans, are at once devoted to temporal ruin. Not indeed to die like the child in question; for "they that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger, for these pine away stricken through for want of the fruits of the field."—[Lam. iv. 9.] Besides this—thousands of ignorant people at home and abroad are doomed to "perish for lack of knowledge."

And this scheme of wholesale destruction is not merely thrown out; but they report its progress, and their sanguine hopes of its ultimate success, in strains of the highest exultation; not very unlike the false mother, whose eyes would probably glisten with savage delight, when she saw the sword drawn from its sheath, and marked the consequent agonies of her rival. For proof of this we refer to the exploits of that *great warrior*, Captain Barlow, and to the way in which a few instances of failure in public collections, have been reported in the *Lantern*. The reason assigned for this outrage is, that the Conference has refused to accede to some "respectful addresses" which have been presented to it. Yes; and the "respectful addresses" of Dr. Coke, to commence a mission in the east were "rejected" till he was ready to break his heart; but did he ever talk of humbling the Conference, by "stopping the supplies," and ruining the West India missions? When Dr. Clarke thought his "respectful addresses" were not treated with proper respect, by what some choose to call the dominant faction, did he ever talk of humbling his opponents, by "stopping the supplies," and destroying the work in Shetland? Did the true mother ever, for a moment, countenance the horrible notion of "dividing" the child with the "sword," by way of enforcing her "respectful addresses?" For a woman to call for a sword to "divide" the child, she declares to be her own, and whom she, therefore, wishes to govern; and for men to insist upon ruling those religious institutions, which they *profess* to love, and at the same time, *purpose* to destroy, is to exhibit a system of heartless imposture, destitute at once of tenderness and truth, and it becomes the duty of all to resist such unfounded and extravagant demands.

On the other hand, when an appeal was made to the heart of the true mother, it was proved that her maternal affection was paramount to every other consideration, for she at once offered to concede every thing rather than witness the destruction of her child. "Her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said—Oh, my Lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it:" verse 26. In the judgment of Solomon, this was the best possible proof she could give, both of her *right* and of her *fitness* to govern the child, and he accordingly directed it to be delivered into her hands. Fifty-two official members of the Liverpool society have determined to appeal to the heart of the Conference in the same way, and in the confident hope of similar success. "We will withhold our contributions, say they, from the Missionary, Contingent, Chapel, and all other funds under the control of Conference; and it is expected that the "bowels" of the priests will "yearn" over these institutions, and they will be compelled to concede every thing, and even to give up their darling power, for the sake of preserving these members of the Wesleyan family. This display of an overwhelming affection towards the institutions of Methodism is to be considered as a clear proof that they are not now, and never were, fit persons to be entrusted with its government, and they are accordingly to be dismissed in disgrace. Solomon, on the other hand, would consider such love as decisive evidence of their being the true parents of the connection, and as constituting a solid reason why it ought to remain in their hands. But slight differences between Solomon and the Association are not new: as one of his proverbs says, "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him;" and they have a knack of giving a verdict *before* hearing the evidence. A party of these men, some time ago, secretly conspired and then expelled the superintendent of the Liverpool North Circuit from the chair, and then went and told the world they were enduring dreadful oppression—so much so, that their case was "without a parallel even in the annals of Methodist despotism." The "ineffable hypocrisy" which could perform such an exploit as that, and then go and whine about oppression, is undoubtedly capable of great things.

As some people endeavour to be pathetic by proclaiming "more last words," so they have published another "case without a parallel." Mr. Whittingham now complains of dreadful oppression, in being compelled to become in name and profession what he has long been in heart and affection—a member of the Association. In declining to give any thing towards the yearly collection, at the March visitation, he deemed it his duty to make some lengthened observations, the general import of which was—that the conduct of the preacher before him was cruel and tyrannical—that the character of the preachers generally was so dubious that money could not be considered safe in passing through their hands—and that the speaker felt great sympathy with the "brethren" who had given it as their decided opinion, that "no honest and upright man" could remain connected with the Conference. At the close of these remarks, he expected to receive, as a matter of course, a society ticket, as the token of continued Christian fellowship between himself and the men of whom he had given such a flaming character. The preacher thinking that, whether this speech was true or false, it was clear there was no Christian fellowship between the parties, hesitated about giving a ticket as the token of what had no existence, and which must therefore be a practical falsehood; and even went so far as to say that he would rather go without his quarterage than be concerned with such a piece of hypocrisy. Mr. W. adds—"I took up my money, and after making a few remarks on the present unaccountable conduct of the preachers, I sat down." Yet, according to the *Lantern*, the preacher who *refused* the money which was actually laid on the table, has acted on the principle of "no penny no Paternoster;" Mr. W. kept his money, gave the preacher a good lecture, and had the last word in the dispute—and yet he is an oppressed man. He did not think his place in Methodism worth an appeal to the leaders' meeting: though the class was told, again and again, that any member, feeling himself aggrieved, was entitled to that privilege; yet he is an oppressed man.

He has now joined the Association, directed his name to be inserted in that "list of worthies," and says, "it is a good cause—the cause of liberty; and I have no doubt of its ultimate success;" and we would fain hope his oppressions are at an end.

But the worst is, that the preacher has showed such "indifference," "apathy," and "unconcern." Perhaps, the reason was, that, having been expelled himself and found it a great deliverance, and having heard a member of the Association say that he was very *happy* after his expulsion, and being fully satisfied that, under all the circumstances of the case, a separation is best for all parties, he thought that to go into hysterics on the occasion would savour too much of that "ineffable hypocrisy" with which he wishes to have nothing to do.

“NOT AT PRESENT, SIR !”

The time for the quarterly visitation of the society for the renewal of the tickets being come, and also for receiving contributions to the yearly collection (one of the funds proscribed by the Association), I felt some degree of curiosity to know to what extent our people had suffered themselves to be influenced in this matter, and was not a little grieved to learn, from good authority, that great numbers had withheld their usual support; and when the question was put by the preacher—“Do you intend to give to the yearly collection?”—the pitiful answer of the objectors has invariably been, “Not at present!” There can be no doubt, therefore, from the universality of its use, that this is the catchword of the Association, and many who had not even been suspected of being members of the confederacy, have now laid themselves open to detection. “Not at present!”—and what talismanic influence are these big words, so fraught with import, to exert? Unparalleled absurdity! To intimidate the Conference into submission! “Not at present,” sullenly muttered by those who, for many years, have been members of that body, which they now so strenuously endeavour to disorganise. “Not at present!” whined out by mere children, girls in their teens, and beardless boys—true as parrots to their teachers. O ye blind leaders of the blind, how tremendous your responsibility, and how heavy the punishment that awaits you for thus misleading the young of Christ’s flock, many of whom will retain the bias thus wickedly given to their tender minds to the end of their existence? “Not at present!” When, then? Never; no, never—if not till the ends you propose be accomplished. Never again will you have the opportunity of relieving distressed chapels, and of extending the means of salvation to those obscure parts of your own country that are comparatively destitute! Never again will you co-operate to throw the light of divine truth upon the countless myriads of the earth, who still sit in darkness and the shadow of death! Never again shall you help to support the drooping widow and fatherless children of those holy and indefatigable men who have died in your service! Never again shall you minister to the wants of those aged and infirm ministers, the sole business of whose life has been to pluck men as brands from the burning, and to whose instrumentality many of you owe your religious good! These are the high privileges from which you exclude yourselves; and that which is of the greatest moment, you thereby deprive yourselves of those rich spiritual blessings which result from their exercise. In drying up the fountains of your charity, you render your own souls lean and sterile; for it is written, “the liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.” “Not at present!” These words, though little and insignificant in themselves, contain an awfully momentous signification to you; and, if acted upon, will exert an important bearing upon your future destiny—you, and those whom you bring under your influence, will be the only sufferers, and to what extent, eternity alone can unfold. We confess we know not which is the greater, the folly or the wickedness which has originated this new fangled, unprincipled scheme of stopping the supplies, for the purpose of forcing men into compliance with your sinister designs. Stop the supplies! As well might you attempt to mop up the Atlantic ocean as to hinder the progress of Methodism, or so to lessen our funds as to limit God’s work. I would apply to you the quaint but good caution of Bishop Hackett—“Beware of novel doctrines, and observe it when you will, if they do not beget new vices; as a mill-stone new peck’d fills the meal, it grinds with more gravel than one that is smooth within;” also Bishop Hall’s advice to his brother—“Let me advise you to walk ever in the beaten road of the church; not to run out into single paradoxes. And if you meet at any time with private conceits that seem more probable, suspect them and yourself; and if they can win you to assent, yet smother them in your breast, and do not dare to vent them out, either by your hands or tongue, to trouble the common peace. *It is a miserable praise to be a wily disturber.*” For your own sakes, therefore, I would beseech you to listen to the above advice, and abstain from the profitless attempt to introduce innovations into the church. You will best promote its interests by

cultivating religion in your own hearts. Let it be your sole business to work out *your own* salvation, and no longer sympathise with that restless spirit of change, which is now causing so much movement and agitation in the church and the world, when

"High and low
Watchwords of party, on all tongues are rife,
As if a church, though sprung from heaven, must owe
To opposites and fierce extremes her life;
Not to the golden mean, and quiet flow
Of truths that soften hatred, temper strife."

Y. Z.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"Father forgive them," is the feeling which will be produced in the breast of every right-hearted Methodist by the result of the recent trials in the Court of Chancery, *Warren v. Burton, &c.* Here is Dr. Warren, who having published a digest of the rules of Methodism, and also a pamphlet on the special subject of district meetings, has come to a conclusion which is not only opposed to the general opinion of the preachers, but has now been pronounced a mistake by the solemn judgment of both the courts of equity. We would that this were nothing worse than a sin of ignorance, and that it may be said of the Doctor and his friends, "They know not what they do." In the mean time, this mistake has been pregnant with an immensity of mischief. Attention has been averted from higher and holier objects, and engrossed with matters of strife and debate: the general work of God seriously obstructed: while numbers have stumbled and fallen—probably to their final undoing. In the mean time, the meeting of delegates, who are to represent cotton-spinner Smith's *forty thousand* is announced to be held in Manchester, in the course of the next month. As the old constitution of Methodism has been found to be such a knotty affair, report says, attempts will be made to manufacture a new one. It is hoped no principle of coercion will emanate from such a source of freedom; should any man, therefore, after seeing the new constitution, say, "the old is better," he will probably be indulged in his whim. If *forty* or *fifty* thousand people choose to adopt the new-fangled constitution, it will verify *Master Smith's* affidavit, show the world how "singularly" the *dear* Doctor and his friends are "fitted for great actions," and place all the parties in a more enviable position than they occupy just at present. In case any of our readers happen to possess a copy of a pamphlet, published by Mark Robinson, containing "the constitution" which he *invented* some years ago, it might be well to make a present of it to one or other of the *delegates (?)* for as the Society and Conference for which that constitution was made never yet existed, the thing is still as good as new; and it is a pity that the labours of *such* a man should be thrown away! It is said the principle of lay delegation is to be introduced into our body, as there are several would-be demagogues in the country who are anxious for employment; of which truth we think the fact of two meetings of delegates and constitution-makers being held in Manchester in the space of one short year is a tolerable proof!

We are amused at the tergiversation of our bewildered contemporary, the *Lantern*, in the Birmingham affair. It is sufficient for us to state, that Mr. Hickling, whose house was Dr. Clarke's home in that town for the last twenty years, and where the expression complained of was uttered (so choice a morsel of slander as to be repeated not less than three times in the above-named publication), positively denies the truth of the statement. To escape the charge of falsehood the Editor very advisedly pretends that the Doctor may have given utterance to the expression elsewhere; and very politely invites us to a visit at the Music Hall. We have more respect for the well known probity of Mr. Hickling, than to offer such an insult to his character, by accepting the invitation. By the bye, as so much stress is laid upon the opinion of Dr. A. Clarke, did our Editors and their worthy associates never read his comment on Psalm 122—6, &c. We think not; it is as follows:—"To the captives in Babylon the prophet Jeremiah had given this charge: 'And seek the peace of the city whether I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray unto the Lord for it: in the peace thereof ye shall have peace.' Was this a duty for the captives? Yes. And is it the duty of every man for his own country? God, nature, common sense, and self-interest say—YES. And what must we think of the wretches, who not only do not thus pray, but labour to destroy the PUBLIC PEACE, subvert the government of their country, raise seditions, and destroy all its civil and RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS? Think of them! Why that *hemp* would be disgraced by *hanging* them."

Important communications have been received from "Epsilon,"—"A Lover of Methodism,"—"Crito,"—"J. H.,"—"J. S.,"—and "Mentor."

We regret that "Polycarp," and "An Observer," are again unavoidably postponed until our next number.

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION ;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES ; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY ; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED " GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION. "

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PRINCIPLES ELUCIDATED BY THE JUDGMENTS OF THE COURTS
OF CHANCERY.

We scarcely know whether to consider the late appeal to the courts of law, on the part of Dr. Warren and the Association, as a good or an evil. That it has turned to the advantage and honour of the Wesleyan Connexion, and the entire discomfiture of the factious party, we are thankful to admit. But the reckless malice, the frantic folly, and the religious obliquity, which could drag the disputes and discipline of the connexion before the tribunals of the country, is matter of deep regret and sorrow. Although the friends we love have come out of this trial with unsullied Christian honour ; the cause we love more, has gained strength and stability, and Methodism has procured an advantageous notoriety ; yet still, we confess that to us it is an odious sight to see " brethren going to law with brethren ;" and trust it may be long before there is a repetition of this scene.

In this case, we have additional proof of the tendency of excited feeling to produce indiscretion of conduct. Did any one, who, in these times of ferment, esteemed his sobriety of mind, entertain a doubt, for a single moment, respecting the final issue ? It is said, and we have good reason to know the statement to be correct, that the Manchester Trustees belonging to the Association, were a full week in beating their opinions into the head of Dr. Warren, and in persuading him to become their tool in the suit. Poor Doctor, how low art thou fallen ! We can honestly say, that our sorrow over this prostrate man is unfeigned ! We respect him on account of his general character—his long standing in the society—his attainments and learning—and his past adherence to the great principles of Methodism. In an evil hour, he yielded himself to the intoxicating notion—most likely suggested by others—that he was called to head an opposition in the body ; and this one false step has led to all the rest. Had his present position been predicted to him, only twelve months ago, we are persuaded, he would have exclaimed with Hazael—"Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" It is perilous for some men to be placed on an eminence ; and no sooner did the Doctor find himself

in his new character than he immediately began to plunge, first into one and then into another quagmire, till, at length, he finds himself virtually out of the Connexion—a discomfited and indignantly-rebuked suitor in the courts of law, and the poor and pitiful tool of headstrong folly. From the grave and sober divine, he is reduced to the vulgar demagogue; from the preacher of peace and righteousness, to an agitator and divider of the church; from the companion of the pious and intelligent portions of the Connexion, to the fraternity and communion of the Association; and from the dignified state of a free and voluntary agent, to the most degrading of all slavery—the puppet of a mob! He may think he is great—tens of thousands think he is little and low; he may, in the excitement of his feelings, imagine he is leading and heading this movement—we are certain, he is as much led by it as a monkey is led by its keeper to dance for the amusement of children; and he may dream that these new friends will be true to his interests, establish his fame, and promote his happiness; we tell him, they will be as false to him as they have been to their former professions, and as soon as the fever subsides, or Doctor Warren ceases to be useful to them, they will abandon him to his own reflections and sorrow. We wonder, by the bye, how it came into the head of the Doctor, that he is the man to suit the taste of a noisy, ranting multitude. His talents are quite of another description. The elegance and politeness he has cultivated—his study of Belles Lettres, and the arts of good speaking—his learning and erudition—and withal, his want of an energetic, flowing, ready, impassioned, and boisterous eloquence, will quite disqualify him from long enjoying the smiles of his new admirers. He is not of the school of O’Connell; and we opine that he will break down under his new occupation, whilst others, of much less intelligence, but much more vulgar oratory, will outstrip the poor Doctor in noise and public favour. In the *Lantern* report of the Hull meeting, the Doctor was made to cut but a sorry figure—whilst David Rowland shines forth as the great man; and if we are not much mistaken in the character of the two men, the Liverpool demagogue will far outstrip the Manchester in their railway motion of ambition and agitation.

But we turn from the chief actor, in these trials, to the trials themselves. They must be considered of immense importance to both parties. Indeed, they are of much more consequence than any thing connected with Methodism since the foundation of its polity, by Mr. Wesley. Without vouching for the accuracy of every sentiment advanced, or claiming the privilege of authoritative interpreters, we shall simply state that which strikes us as obviously arising out of these proceedings.

It has long been held by the agitators, and doubted by others—that the Poll Deed appointing the Conference, was invalid in law, and if ever it came before the Courts, would be found nothing better than a piece of waste paper. This question is now settled. It is true, the mooted point was not the validity of this instrument. This was not formally debated and affirmed; but, that which is of equal consequence as a proof of its being good in law took place, for both courts proceeded to adjudicate on the provisions of that deed. This assumes, and also establishes, the legality of this instrument. Both the Vice-Chancellor and the Lord Chancellor had this document before them; and, of course, must enter into an examination, not only of its provisions, but also of the manner of its execution; and if they had found that in this latter particular it was unsound, they would not have proceeded to exercise jurisdiction on its provisions. They would have told the parties on both sides, that the Deed itself being informal and illegal, they could not proceed to any judgment. But, instead of this, we do not hear a syllable against the legality of this instrument; but, on the other hand, the Vice-Chancellor expressly affirms the right of the court to exercise its jurisdiction in respect of the deed; and consequently that it is good and valid in law.—This has always been assumed by the Conference itself; but, never having been tried before the courts, it was doubted by some whether it would stand such an ordeal. The question is now placed beyond doubt; and it follows, that the Conference is a *legal establishment*. This fact settles many very important points respecting the position in which the Connexion stands.

The question of lay delegates being admitted, to form an integral part of this body is decided. The provision is, that it shall consist of Ministers only; and this provision is unalterable, even by its own act. It may commit suicide and destroy itself; but it cannot, either by its own vote, or a new compact with the people, destroy its own identity. The preachers composing it have no more choice in the matter than

the most indifferent persons. If it should ever happen that the friends of a mixed Conference gain the ascendant, and a majority be found in that body ready to vote in favour of that proposition, this majority would be of no avail: they could not vote away the legal charter which constitutes their identity, or admit any others to join them.

This being the case, one subject of debate may be considered at an end. If a Methodist preacher sees reason not to unite with a corporate body of Christian Ministers, whose existence, in that capacity, is defined by law, and which he can never alter, he has a right to act on his convictions. He may judge, that it is better to have the rights, doctrines, and discipline of the ministry, fashioned by the public voice right or wrong; but this was not Mr. Wesley's view of the matter. It was his great wish, and desire that, the ministry he had raised should be perpetuated—the doctrines he had taught remain unaltered—and the discipline he had established continue in its efficiency; and for these purposes he founded and legalized the Conference. It must be confessed that there is much more glory in a minister being left to model his own system, form for himself a party, give his own name to his creations, and live, in all future history, as the noble founder of a sect, than in yielding his loyal adherence to one already formed. But whether it is not more safe for religion, the good of souls, and even for himself, is another question. Fewer persons are called to the task of sect-making, than assume to themselves the right of so doing. It is most sickening to see the number of inflated, spiritual coxcombs, of our day, setting up for themselves in the vocation of church legislation. Mr. Wesley saw something of this folly in his own day; and, instead of leaving his connexion to the hazard of being revolutionized, at the option of every upstart aspirant, he took the precaution of establishing Methodism on the basis of law. To those preachers who have had the judgment to see the advantage of this, it has afforded liberty, protection, and the opportunity of doing the greatest good; whilst those who have panted for independence and left the body, have received their reward, and generally sunk into insignificance and uselessness.

Our remark is equally applicable to the people. Many of them may think it better for religion, to leave it altogether to their own patronage and guidance. One of the fashionable dogmas of modern philosophy is, to despise the wisdom of past ages. A more egotistic period never existed than the present. The living race of men think themselves the perfection of wisdom, and scout the lights of former ages, and the discoveries and safeguards of the olden times. This spirit has found its way into the church; and it is thought by our modern quacks that every thing in religion as well as society, needs the benefit of their reforming sagacity. The decisions of the courts of law have taught these gentlemen that, at least, they may save themselves the trouble of one favourite object—the reformation of John Wesley. With strange and provoking forethought, the good old gentleman, it seems, had some apprehension that a class of these mongrel disciples might rise up, and he took the precaution to place his doctrines, discipline, and connexion, beyond the reach of their attempts. He, no doubt, had the conviction that the external order of any church is only valuable as it administers the blessings of experimental and practical religion; and having examined first principles carefully for himself, and watched the working of his system for many years, he concluded that the best boon he could leave his followers was the inheritance well secured, which he himself, as he believed, had received from God.—He was not mistaken. That blessing has been enjoyed by hundreds of thousands since his day—it has afforded them all that religion can give—it has led to the conversion of a countless multitude of sinners to Christ—has spread its ample shadow into distant lands—and stands, at this time, one of the finest monuments of enlightened wisdom, and the best gift of Divine Providence, ever possessed by this world. We are thankful that the vast majority of our people are happy in the possession of their privileges; and it is only a few who would have the hardihood to destroy this goodly fabric. These persons think it an infringement of their rights, that they are not suffered to carry their intentions into effect. It is no doubt an abridgement of liberty of a certain kind, that is—the liberty to destroy. But how can they claim the right to pull down that which they had no hand in building up, we are at a loss to conceive. Had their communion with Methodism been the fellowship of persons in a state of perfect lawlessness, having every thing to choose and adopt for themselves, then they would have the power to modify their own system as they please. But Methodism is not theirs, it is not ours; it is the private inheritance of no man, or set of men; and the members of society have no more right—and, thank God, no more power—to alter its essential principles than the preachers. Both classes have been admitted to its privi-

leges; these privileges have been well defined, and secured on both sides; and it will be for their mutual advantage to end the useless dispute on this subject; for the matters in debate are placed beyond the reach of either. The preachers cannot give up their place, if they had the inclination; and the Association cannot occupy it. The building erected on this noble foundation may be demolished by the storms and agitations of the connexion; but the foundation itself cannot be removed. As long as there are forty preachers to meet annually, they will have the power to appoint to the chapels, and administer all the functions and powers of the Poll Deed; though they may be assaulted by a multitude without—a thousand fold greater than themselves.

Another important question which this judgment has fairly settled, though in an indirect manner, is the large chapel property of the connexion, and the safety of the Trustees, against the aggressions of the opposing faction. We have the means of knowing that the Association contemplated an aggressive movement on the chapels of the connexion, and threatened that they would even possess themselves of, at least, a fair portion of our places of worship; that a coach and horses might be driven through the Deeds, and they were worth nothing to the Conference, if the people chose to assert their rights, because they were built for their specific use and benefit. It is extremely probable that these Chancery suits arose out of this opinion; and it was intended to make a breach in these securities, for the purpose of letting in a leaven of democratic influence, by which, ultimately, the original design of the settlement of chapels should be vitiated and set aside. It is scarcely to be supposed that the Trustees of Manchester, who espoused the cause of Dr. Warren, would do it from a spirit of pure and disinterested benevolence towards him; or of unsophisticated hatred towards the preachers. Indeed, either of these passions might exist in such strength as to make it pleasant to gratify them; but we cannot think them so purely good as to do this from mere love; or so bad as to do it from sheer malice. They, no doubt, looked farther than the gratification of a passion; and contemplated the admission of such a flood of democracy into the management, through the medium of the districts, as should swamp the rights of Conference on the one hand, and of the Trustees on the other.

Properly understood, their rights are reciprocal; and they are secured by law.—The structure of the Chapel Deeds, in conjunction with the Conference Deed—making their security rest on each other—is one of those marks of superior wisdom, or of the merciful interposition of Divine Providence, which so generally marked the proceedings of our venerable founder. By the formation of these two Deeds the rights of both parties are secured, and yet neither are absolute or independent. The Conference has the right to appoint preachers, to conduct the worship, to guide and maintain the spiritual interests of the societies assembling on the premises; and, on the other hand, the Trustees are the legal guardians of the property; the executive to carry the provisions of the trust into effect; and have the power to see that the ministers preach the doctrines of the Wesleyan theology, faithfully and truly. Neither party can act without the other, or invade each other's rights. The Trustees can never appropriate these chapels to any other purpose than that designed by the Deeds; and the Conference can never abrogate the charter which constitutes their title to the religious use of the buildings. And, what is further to be noted, as a mark of great sagacity and care in the formation of those Deeds is, the right of property, and the current rental belonging to both parties; and yet absolutely to neither. It is uniformly so disposed of as not to allow any class of persons to derive any pecuniary benefit from it; and must be devoted to the furtherance and extension of the work of God in some shape or other.

Since our present agitations commenced, and hearing the threats of the Association men, we have heard several very worthy and active Trustees express their uneasiness respecting the security of chapel property; and, consequently, their own insecure position. These worthy and disinterested men may now rest perfectly satisfied. These suits in Chancery, it is true, were not instituted to try the validity of Trust Deeds—to define the rights and powers of Trustees; or to express any judgment on the exact posture in which these parties stood. But, these Deeds were in Court—were examined both by the Vice-Chancellor and the Lord Chancellor—no flaw was detected in their structure—no argument raised by counsel, on either side, respecting their being valid indentures; and the Vice-Chancellor asserted and maintained the right of the Courts to exercise their supervision; which supposes that they lie within the pale of law; and both Chancellors adjudicated on the provisions of these Deeds. How, we would ask, could a judgment be made to rest on a legal instrument, without an admission, at

the same time, of the validity of this instrument? If any doubt was entertained by our friends the Trustees, on this subject (and we know such doubts did exist), this trial must have entirely dissipated them. The principle is now established—stands on the records of the highest court of equity in England—in the adjudication of the highest functionary of the law, that the Chapel Deeds of the Methodist connexion are true and valid instruments. The effect of this must be to give both parties an identity in law; so that the Conference, on the one hand, through the Poll Deed, can stand on the floor of our Courts, to sue or be sued; and the Trustees, on the other hand, through their Trust Deeds, can do the same, to vindicate their rights against all aggression.—These two instruments are so intertwined, by reference and usage, as to make the security of one the security of both. In like manner the Trustees and the preachers have interests so entirely identical and mutual, as to make the interests of one class the interests of the other. They must stand or fall together. If the Conference violate its own charter, one of two things must follow—the abrogation of its existence, or, the redress of the grievance by the injured parties appealing to the courts of law: so, in like manner, if the Trustees violate the provisions of their trust, in any way, they forfeit their rights; and the courts will compel them to exercise their prerogatives according to the provisions of the Deeds.

Here then we have another item struck from the list of litigated questions. No agitation can disturb the security of the chapels, or the rights and privileges of Trustees. They (the trustees) may join the malcontents, if so disposed, and agitate the connexion on other points; but they cannot throw the chapel trusts, as a bone of contention, amongst the dogs of war. Not that we have any apprehension that any great number are disposed to do so. They have been tested by the times—the movement of the anti-Methodist party—and the appeals of a few of their brethren; but, as a body, they have stood firm to every branch of our economy. And as the Trustees cannot innovate on the provisions of their trusts, so, on the other hand, they are perfectly inaccessible in their rights; and the swelling flood of radicalism which foams and threatens our institutions, cannot touch them any farther than as it may injure their property by abstracting the congregations. Then we may venture to remind the agitators, that as the connexion is in secure possession of the chapels, they will still be used for those *purposes only*, which our founder intended: the promulgation of his doctrines—the pure and spiritual worship of Almighty God—the peaceful and pious assemblage of the flock of Christ, for religious edification and the conversion of sinners to the Christian faith.—That the day is very distant when these monuments of the piety and benevolence of Methodism will be changed into *opposition meeting-houses*—that is, places for debate, agitation, a rampant religious radicalism—where unbounded license shall be given to prating folly, excited passion, inflated vanity, an oppressive and tyrannic rule over their brethren.

This, no doubt, will be considered a very great hardship, and a positive injury inflicted on the rights of the Association. Sympathizing most truly with the sentiments and feelings of the *destructives* without, they consider it quite within the sphere of their vocation to scatter the church, wherever they are silly enough to allow it, and would most gladly appropriate its property to uses, as alien from true Methodism as it is possible. We make not these remarks without some foundation. The chairman of the Liverpool Association remarked at the school meeting, in Mount Pleasant Chapel, that, in all probability, the Lord Chancellor would have to determine to whom the vestries of Leeds-street Chapel belonged—meaning, by that expression, as we understood him, that it was doubtful whether that building was legally under the control of the Trustees, or of the majority of the leaders' meeting: intending, if the latter had been proved, to establish the jurisdiction of that corrupt body in that place; which would have amounted, in effect, to their permanent government over the society. When our ears were saluted by this, perhaps, slip of the tongue, we wondered what it meant; but the matter has since been explained. We can have no doubt, from this expression, and other evidence, that Dr. Warren's suit was only intended as the first of a series. The Association designed to make a lodgment in our chapel property by this first assault, and to follow it up, had they been successful, by other attempts, so as ultimately to possess themselves of the entire control of the whole. Many of the disciples of the confederacy have made no secret of the matter: but have publicly avowed that, at no distant period, they should be in possession of this power. Because the Trust Deeds, they have affirmed, declare that the premises shall be held for the benefit of the respective societies, it follows, that the majorities of those societies have the power to determine every thing respecting their use. This was a fine stretch of thought on the part of the Association. Just as if, because an asylum is built for the use of madmen, the majority of the inmates shall

have the right of regulating its government. No; these places of worship will be preserved for nobler purposes than those which have been contemplated by these men; they will stand as the sanctuaries of God, in which will flow, for many generations to come, the pure waters of life and salvation, in deeper and deeper torrents, and more blessed effects.

A third consequence of this great law-suit is, the confirmation of the pastoral and spiritual jurisdiction of the Conference, in the intervals of its yearly meetings, by the Districts. Ever since what is technically called "the Leeds case," the connexion has been, more or less, agitated respecting the authority of Districts. It was strenuously argued at the time, that Districts had no jurisdiction in circuits, and that the whole of that proceeding was an outrage on the laws of the body. This has been reiterated a thousand times, and is made one of the matters of agitation with the Association.—We are quite aware that the District Meeting brought before the Courts of Chancery was constituted to try an accused preacher, and in the *matter* on which its jurisdiction was exercised, it differed from the subjects on which the Leeds District exercised its functions. Let this point be conceded, yet, we think, the decision which goes to affirm the legality of the District which tried Dr. Warren will hold good in respect to Districts in general. We will give our reasons for this by and bye.

In the mean time, it is of immense importance to the purity of the ministry and the success of the work of God, that, by the discomfiture of Dr. Warren, the old practice is fully established: viz.—the trial of preachers by a District of their own body. In fact, at every regular District Meeting, each preacher is put on his trial annually. Had this authority of the new tribunal been established, this would have been nullified; and when the usual question came to be proposed, the person might say, "No; I refuse to answer any question: your tribunal is not legal; your jurisdiction does not, consequently, extend to me; and I claim my liberty of not answering your question."—Great inconvenience must have attended this. The examination must have been transferred to Conference itself, or not gone into at all; and as all the preachers could not attend, the latter alternative must have been the consequence. In this state of things, if a preacher could contrive to keep clear of the charges specified in the Plan of Pacification, and ward off any visitation of that tribunal, though defective in evangelical sentiment, his ministry, while free from positive errors, might possibly pass.—Those who have attended the examination of the Districts, know well that they are not farcical: great searchings of heart, humiliation, prayer, purposes of renewed devotedness to God, and resolution to prosecute the duties of the ministry with increased fidelity, usually follow. The moral effect of these examinations would be lost, if the new tribunal were established. But even this would not be the worst evil to be apprehended. It would only be necessary for a preacher, so disposed, to establish a party in his favour, strong enough to protect him during the year, and then he might dispose of his duties as he thought proper. It is possible, that this supposed contingency may be denied; it may be affirmed, the people are not likely to gather round a preacher to protect him in any delinquency; their purity would be sufficient security against this. We ask—what did they do at Manchester, when Dr. Warren chose to deny the authority of his brethren, and throw himself into their arms?—They nobly bore him on their shield, revolted with him, placed themselves in a state of separation, and laid the foundation of a new—a Warrenite connexion. Let the appeal be to the people, instead of our usual tribunals, when preachers are accused of any delinquency, and these results must be constantly taking place. It is, indeed, true that the Conference will in every year arrive, and then the disputed matter will be settled; so will next August arrive, and yet, notwithstanding this, the mischief is done—the connexion convulsed, divided, and bleeding at every pore—as the simple consequence of Dr. Warren demurring from the decision of his brethren, and raising a party to support and protect him. It is now established that this protection cannot be afforded by any of the local tribunals; that every preacher is amenable to the District for the whole of his ministerial conduct, which may exercise its discipline in his case at any time; and it is in vain for him to attempt to shield himself behind the favoritism or the factious purposes of any body of men. This ought to be a matter of thankfulness to all our people, as they are deeply interested in the purity and efficiency of their own ministry. As we have no desire for the perpetuity of Methodism except, as a system of pure and undefiled religion, we are truly grateful to God that its strict and salutary discipline over the preachers has not been ruined by these proceedings. Ministers, like other men, need the restraints of discipline; and we have no doubt, but the chief *secondary* cause of the prosperity of Methodism, has been the pains taken to keep them pure and

holy. Whilst sufficient scope has been given for the exercise of those various gifts and talents which God has, from time to time, conferred on his servants, it has been the constant aim of the Conference, after the example of Mr. Wesley, to keep the preachers devoted fully to the work of saving souls. By the establishment of their excellent discipline over the ministry, through the Districts, they will be still able to secure this benefit to the church; had Dr. Warren succeeded in gaining the establishment of his new tribunal, we believe in our consciences, that in a short time this advantage would have been endangered and ultimately lost. We now return to give our reasons for believing that the judgment of the two Chancellors has established the pastoral and spiritual authority of the Conference through the medium of its Districts.

1.—It has been clearly demonstrated, especially by the Lord Chancellor, that the Plan of Pacification did not annul the other rules, on the subject of Districts; that those rules related to a particular point of discipline only; and on this opinion, he founded his judgment, affirming the legality of Dr. Warren's trial. This has been strenuously denied by Dr. Warren in his pamphlet, relied upon by his adherents, and has often been argued in our meetings, in this town, in relation to other subjects. We have heard it asserted, again and again, that the Plan of Pacification abrogated all the other rules of the Connexion; but now, on the opinion and decision of an impartial judge, the contrary is affirmed, establishing the principle that all preceding laws for the appointment and regulation of these meetings remained entire.

2.—The trial of preachers is only one particular of a general provision; but it has been affirmed by the courts that this one particular, drawn from this general provision, is valid; and if so, then the whole series must be so too. If, as adjudged by the Lord Chancellor, the rules of 1791—2—3, appointing and regulating the functions of Districts remain in force, then it follows that their entire provisions do so. It will be found, on examination, that these rules only relate to the trial of preachers incidentally, and as one article of jurisdiction, which the exercise of a spiritual supervision contemplated. On the establishment of Districts, we find this was the avowed reason:

“Question—What regulations are necessary for the preservation of our *whole economy*, as the Rev. Mr. Wesley left it? Answer—Let the three kingdoms be divided into Districts.” The establishment of these local jurisdictions then, it is here seen, had relation to the “*whole economy*” of Methodism. It is decided by the Lord Chancellor that the Plan of Pacification did not annul any of the laws on the subject and consequently, that they still relate to the “*whole economy*” of Methodism. The subsequent enactments of Conference regulate these meetings, as to the manner of their proceedings, but nothing has been done to alter their original design.

3.—The deed of Declaration which is now recognised as a legal document, expressly provides for the exercise of this disciplinary power, through its President and officers. After making provision for the election and duties of the President, the Deed enacts, that, he shall possess “such other powers, privileges, and authorities, as the Conference shall from time to time see fit to entrust into his hands.” It is clear from this that the Conference may entrust its President to hold districts; and, if instead of existing in the regular form in which they have been long arranged, still the whole nation being divided into circuits alone, it would be competent to give the President a power in “*any critical case*,” to form a District or Committee for the occasion. If instead of the wise and salutary exercise of discipline intrusted to a number of preachers united on the present plan, the power had been left solely with the President, there would have been a much greater probability of its abuse. The division of authority amongst many is much more likely to be justly and liberally exercised than by one.

We have not space to enter at greater length into this subject; and have been induced to make these remarks to show that another topic of agitation on the part of the Association, may be abandoned as hopeless. We only wish that the “*Leeds Case*” had been taken before the courts of law in conjunction with the Warren case. We have no fear as to the result. Our opinion, of course, will not be taken by the Association; but we are bold to affirm that no transgression of law took place in that case; and it would have afforded us the highest gratification to have seen the Lord Chancellor's; or, indeed, the judgment of any competent and impartial tribunal, on the question. Then, on this principle it follows, that our circuit meetings can never become independent judicatories. This is the favourite object of many of our reformers. The genius of Methodism as well as its *legal* constitution is opposed to the notion.—Such a principle could not be adopted without splitting the connexion into independent churches. A common system of laws and mutual aid and co-operation, presupposes a common government. Ours has been established for us by our founder

and it is not in the power of any of its disciples, preachers, or people, to alter its essential principles. To those who have a fondness for novelties, this will be considered a great defect; but those also who, like ourselves, have some respect for the evidence of past ages, the safeguards of law, and the repose of religion on a well-considered and well-adjusted platform, it will be felt an advantage. Experience shows that our foundation can bear a noble structure; and those who would alter it for some untried scheme of their own, are possessed of more courage than happens to actuate us. We quarrel with no man, or number of men, for thinking well of the independent mode of church government; but as so many tens of thousands prefer the Wesleyan form, from witnessing its efficiency, as well as being edified by its ordinances; why will those gentlemen disturb us in our—if they please, inglorious—adherence to this old and venerated mansion.

Besides the preceding principles, which have been elucidated by these law proceedings, it turns out that the Nonconformity of the Wesleyan connexion is not Dissent, in the strict and proper sense of the term. Dissent, in most of its forms, rests on the popular voice. The vote determines who shall be minister, who shall be member, and what shall be taught. If the latter is not done directly it is done indirectly. Instead of this being the case, by a most astonishing foresight, Mr. Wesley, in his own life-time established his whole economy on the basis of law. He himself formed the Conference, and then legalized it. He devised the Chapel Deed, and enrolled it in Chancery. He made it impossible that any other doctrines than his own should be taught in Methodist pulpits; and, in fact, established the system as it now exists in every thing essential. This, as far as we know, is an unexampled circumstance in the ecclesiastical history of the world. It shows clearly the leaning of Mr. Wesley's mind. He professed through life an attachment to the church and institutions of the country, and his resolution not to deviate from either any farther than imperious duty obliged him. Hence he adjusted all his plans on these principles, and made them as identical as possible with the established form of the government in church and state. The time has been when this would have been applauded as patriotic and Christian. That time, we fear, is gone. Infidelity, popery, democracy, have united to subvert those noble principles of freedom and law which have laid the foundation of our national greatness, liberty, and religion; and reduce the whole to chaos, and be remodeled by living opinion, passion, and interest. The sweep of this storm has reached us; and we are not offended that the enemies of England should be the enemies of Methodism. If Methodism had the *un-English* character, which should recommend it to the Goths, who are now hewing down the noble and fair bulwarks of our country's past security and glory, it should be repudiated by us, and left as the inheritance of the men who are now seeking to make it the prey or the property of radicalism. When it is placed in company with the many-headed monster which is now yelling for the spoils of the church and the throne, we promise it shall not be troubled with our vindication. When it is made to speak the language of a false and infidel liberalism, and lowered down to the condition of a creeping co-partnership with the narrow sectarianism which, under the guise of setting up truth, is throwing it from its pedestal, to be torn and trampled in the dust.

We have one request to make to the politico-religious agitators of the connexion: it is, that when they are in possession of rule, and have reduced the body to a level with their own views, and made it the instrument of their purposes, they will be good enough to change its name. Let not the venerated name of Wesley be attached to a system which he would scorn to own; and instead of being the offspring of his sanctified wisdom, his diligent study of the Bible, the leadings of divine providence, and the feelings of his patriotic heart, is the offspring of that which he spent his life in opposing. No narrow, selfish, sectarian antipathies actuated him. He saw and deplored the defects and evils of the national institutions; but instead of taking occasion from this to destroy them, he sought their improvement and perfection. This is genuine Methodism still. While it seeks, primarily and as its proper business, the religious improvement of the country and of the world, it forms its economy on the principle of respect to all, and an especial desire to promote the security, permanency, and glory of the institutions of the nation.

The stability given to the Wesleyan discipline, as it has ever been administered, by these decisions, is of great consequence to its well-being. We have no doubt but the friends of the connexion feel the security of their position much more than they did, and the best use that can be made of the triumph is to employ it as a means of increased zeal for the extension of religion and the work of God. We would not give a straw for the conservation of the Wesleyan economy, except as it is calculated to pro-

mote and extend "pure and undefiled religion." It has long been tried, and has succeeded. This is a proof of efficiency; and as the main questions of our disputes may be considered as settled, we earnestly entreat all lovers of Methodism now to turn their attention from the subjects of contention to the cultivation of a kind, affectionate, catholic, and sanctified spirit; and to devote their time, influence, and zeal to the extension and triumphs of true religion. The conversion of men to God is the legitimate calling of all the followers of Wesley; and rightly understood and used, the late decisions will increase their facilities for this. We must keep in mind the truth taught by all history, that it is not even a scriptural creed, a pure order of worship, a well-adjusted economy, and the administration of the whole in an orderly manner, that can produce extensive spiritual results. The whole must be touched by affectionate, prayerful, believing piety; and especially the Spirit of God must be poured out in copious effusions. Let us all be found in more fervent prayer and zealous labours, that religion may be revived in its spirit, power, purity, and triumphs.

THE NEW CONNEXION AND ITS INDEPENDENCY.

We have in a former article avowed the apostolic Wesley to have been under the specially-directing hand of God, when he, by the Deed of Declaration, legally prevented the admission of lay delegates into Conference. We shall now assign a second reason to justify the assertion. By the exclusion of lay delegation, he constituted the Methodists not nominally, but *really* a Connexion.

A Connexion may be as "the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted" by common laws and common sympathies: or, a Connexion may be loose and feeble—possessing little sympathy, and having a diversity of usages, some in unison, and others in collision with general rules. The Wesleyan Methodists, by their freedom from the tyranny of lay delegates in Conference, are a Connexion of the former kind: they are strictly one family, under one government; and hence, they "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep"—they "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." But the New Methodists, by the dominion of the laity, are a Connexion of the latter description. It is true, that the Conference, subject to certain restrictions, makes laws which are intended to be binding on the whole community; but it cannot always—even when the prescribed limits of legislative authority have not been at all transgressed—enforce its enactments. Independency pervades the body to such an extent, that the Conference, though constituted, in the estimation of the people, a pattern of perfection in ecclesiastical legislation, is sometimes in a most painfully humiliating condition.

Had we access to the private Minutes—(how long will this Christian people, who profess to hate whatever is close and secret in the church of God, continue to publish *private* Minutes?)—our store of corroborative facts might be greatly enlarged. The public Minutes, however, furnish us with authentic intelligence of transactions, in which we feel ourselves to be as in "a tower of strength."

As every circuit is authorised, by the general rules of the Connexion, to make by-laws, it seems that some circuit legislators who possess a con-

siderable portion of Independency, carry this right to an extreme which the Conference has to rebuke. Their independent and unconstitutional innovations are matters of loud complaint in the Minutes of 1824: "The Conference learns with regret that in some circuits the quarterly meetings are not regularly constituted;" and it directed the superintendents to suppress such irregularity. How far they would succeed in their commission we cannot ascertain; one thing we know—the contest between the preachers and these independent circuits would be very unequal: the former would have to contend with *words*, and the latter with *votes*—a majority of which decide all disputed questions.

The arbitrary encroachments of Independency are again the theme of bitter lamentation in the Minutes of 1834: "The Conference deeply regrets to learn that considerable irregularity prevails in some circuits, in regard to the preachers' salaries;" and the Conference "requires them, in justice to the preachers, to keep the rules of the Connexion." It is evident from this Minute, that the Conference has to expostulate with a number of circuits, who *please themselves* to what extent they are subject to its authority. The Minute also shows how far the declared happiness of the preachers of this community is to be credited!

There is one point on which the Conference has been in unsuccessful conflict with the Independency of the body, upwards of *a dozen* years! We invite the attention of our readers to this fact—more especially the attention of all Methodist trustees, who have been urged to sanction the introduction of independency into the Old system. The healthful state of chapel trusts is necessary, not for the comfort of trustees and their relatives only, but for the prosperity of that Methodism which is "Christianity in earnest." Great zeal and liberality have been manifested in the Wesleyan Connexion to secure these important objects. From November 1832, to the Conference 1834, *one hundred* cases of embarrassed trustees have been relieved; and debts, amounting to upwards of £61,563, have been extinguished. This is a most honourable and triumphant evidence that the Wesleyan Methodists are a Connexion indeed! If lay delegation had swayed its iron sceptre over the body, the preachers would have had so little influence, and the trustees, together with the people, would have been so imbued with a freezing Independency, that these princely achievements of charity could never have been realised. Do any persons doubt, or deny this statement? Let them look at the New Connexion!

One of their more eminent letter-writers—whom it has been our duty to *illuminate*, and we hope he will excuse a little more *light* being thrown upon him—speaks of "well-tryed institutions and established funds," as powerful attractions to gain proselytes to his community: but we take the liberty to ask this author—has the New Connexion any "well-tryed institution, or established fund," to save embarrassed trustees and their families from ruin? His reply must be, whenever he may choose to give it—*none whatever*. Many attempts have been made to form one, but they

have all terminated in mortifying disappointment. As the history of these failures is both interesting and admonitory, we shall not make any apology for laying it before our readers.

A plan to form a Chapel Fund was published in the Minutes of 1821: again it was inserted, with some improvements, in the Minutes of 1822. But the fund, thus sanctioned by two Conferences, soon expired; independency strangled it! The resistance to the plan was so vigorous that the Conference of 1823 enacted that "those circuits which have contributed thereto shall have their contributions returned." After this failure, nothing more is said on the subject, until 1826, when "the Conference, having received various applications for relief from distressed chapels, is again compelled to refer the trustees of our chapels to the necessity of establishing a chapel fund; and the Conference particularly requests our trust bodies and circuit meetings to confer on the subject, and to report their wishes and opinions to the annual committee, by the 25th of December next ensuing." "In a multitude of counsellors there is safety:" except—it would seem—to sinking trustees, for they continued without relief. The Conference of 1827 appointed a small number of counsellors—"a committee to digest a plan for the relief of distressed chapels," immediately after the Conference, and "to carry such plan into operation during the present year."

As this committee was entrusted with very great power for the *formation* and *execution* of a scheme to benefit every oppressed trust estate in the Connexion—it is, probably, not unfair to inquire, of whom did it consist? Was this large grant of power *balanced* between the preachers and the people.—No. The balance theory of the constitution was, of course, inapplicable to the establishment of a Chapel Fund! An oligarchy, consisting of *seven laymen*, held the whole of this authority! Though *three* preachers resided in the town where these lay-lords were appointed to assemble, not *one* was allowed to be on the committee. Neither the councils, nor the suffrages, nor the prayers of ministers were at all necessary on such an occasion! Could any plan from these "seven wise men of Greece," who so highly esteemed their pastors as to have them excluded from their deliberations, work well? Let us see. The Conference of 1828 adopted and recommended the plan to the Connexion; yet the Conference, as in former years, was unable to enforce it on the people. Independency struggled against the plan, and the Conference struggled for it; this conflict was maintained for *five* years, until Conference yielded to independency the palm of victory. It was found at the Conference of 1833, that one-half of the Connexion boldly resisted the measure, though their delegates had approved of it; and that the other, where the claimants existed, had, on the whole, given it a cold reception, for the amount raised during the year, was only £71 13s. 0d. The moans of the defeated Conference are truly pitiable! "The Conference regrets that the plan acted upon for the last five years for the relief of chapels in

distress, has not met with the cordial support of the various circuits, and feels compelled to relinquish such plan."

Still, the honour of the body, and the distressed trustees, crying loudly for help, required something to be done. The Conference, therefore, appointed another committee, consisting of five laymen and—we suppose, as an act of *special grace*—one preacher, to draw up another plan, and to submit it to the Conference of 1834. What was then done, we are unable to determine; for the public Minutes, with regard to either committee or plan, are "silent as the grave!" What a demonstration that lay delegation and a Chapel Fund are incompatible! Let the admirers of such a system of ecclesiastical polity well consider it!

The information which we have given our readers warrants the conclusion—that this section of the church militant, though called a Connexion, is *de facto*, under the rule of independency. The transition from an almost nominal Connexion to *professed* independency is far from difficult. The Conference, we have reason to fear, has hold of comparatively few chapels. Many chapels—out of hatred to "the Old Conference plan," which legally secures chapels to the people for whom they are erected—are settled on a *liberal* foundation, so that the trustees are, virtually, proprietors of these sanctuaries. Hence they can, whenever it is agreeable, withdraw, with their chapels, from the body, and denominate themselves "Independents!" If this be denied, we can refer to whole circuits—London and Norwich, for example—that have been thus lost to the Connexion: yea, we may bring forward some more recent events, which have transpired in one circuit, which reported in the Minutes of 1833, 7 chapels, 17 local preachers, and 500 members; the same circuit, but now called BILSTON, reported in the Minutes of 1834, 2 chapels, 11 local preachers, and 320 members. It appears from these returns, that six local preachers, acting "as lords over God's heritage,"—for the besetting sins of lordly ambition and lordly tyranny in the church of Christ are not, as some seem to think, confined to travelling preachers—have alienated from the Connexion 5 chapels and about 200 members. This alienation of chapels and members is *not illegal*, for the Minutes express no displeasure; neither do they announce the appointment of any committee to recover them to the body! What is to prevent these triumphs of independency from being imitated in other circuits? What a prospect does this open to the New Connexion! We would advise the champions of this community, who imagine they have a call to reform the Wesleyan Connexion, to "look at home"—to secure their own Connexion from dissolution—to live in peace—and to go earnestly into the wilderness after the lost sheep, to restore them to the fold of Christ.

Their form of government we honestly reject. Had their Independency governed the Old Connexion, it never could have attained its present magnitude and glory. Its union has been its strength, to carry scriptural holiness into the four quarters of the globe. Had there been

less unity in the body, that concentration of talents which, as a machine of vast power, has been so successfully brought to bear on the accomplishment of grand plans for "the furtherance of the gospel," would have been utterly impracticable. If independency were now to be let loose on the Connexion, "Ichabod" might be written upon it. Distrust, jealousies, confusion, and tyranny, as so many thunderbolts, would strike the temple of Methodism, and spread the ruin round in thousands of fragments.

If a crisis were to come in which we shall have to make our choice between the Independency and the dissolution of the connexion, we speak advisedly in declaring, we should prefer its dissolution; and so become proper Independents, both in profession and practice. But such a crisis never has, and, we believe, never will come. The Wesleyan Methodist connexion shall live "long as the sun and moon endure." "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early."

EPSILON.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

It appears exceedingly desirable that the terms of a decision so important as that recently pronounced by the Lord Chancellor, in the Manchester case, should be distinctly understood; and I, therefore, trouble you with one or two observations as to their meaning. I have before me both that report of the judgment which appeared in the *Watchman*—and which, as I have reason to believe, has been pronounced by the Chancellor himself to be correct—and that contained in the accredited organ of the defeated party, which, of course, is somewhat garbled. There are three topics upon which, as I conceive, the expressions of the eminent judge alluded to, have been misinterpreted.

The first is the suggestion which he very kindly and considerably threw out—"Whether it would not be advisable to make some endeavour, for the interests of this society, by some attempt towards accommodation, to put an end to those dissensions which had given rise to the present proceedings." Now, I have heard it strangely argued that this passing hint was nothing less than a grave recommendation, given to the Conference, by Lord Lyndhurst, the conservative Chancellor of England, to concede every claim which has been so boldly urged upon it—to upset the established discipline of the Wesleyan connexion—converting it, at once and irremediably, into the most powerful engine of democratical excitement which any age ever witnessed, and thus to lend every assistance in its power to the attempted overthrow—by Jews, Turks, and Infidels; and by men who are either not half so wise or not half so honest as either Jews, Turks, or Infidels—of the religious institutions of this great country. I read the passage very differently; and that in the full memory of those encomiums upon Dr. Warren's general character, which will subsequently be noticed. It appears to me to impress upon that unhappy man such advices as the following:—"Remember what the Vice-Chancellor told you: 'that the publication' of that speech of yours, which we have heard so much about, would 'go a great way to create that very schism in the Methodist Society which, if it is not put an end to, will infallibly destroy the Society itself.' I exhort, I beseech you to desist from such divisive proceedings: nay—if wounded vanity be the occasion of this feeling—I soothe, I flatter you; I know you *are* a very clever fellow; I have seen your picture in the *Imperial Magazine*—I have read your son's Life of you, and your 'Digest!' and then, the Sermons!—I dandle you, you great baby!"

The second topic of misapprehension is to be found in the latter part of the Chancellor's observations. He declares—"whether" the members of the District Committee "acted wisely, discreetly, temperately, or harshly—these are matters with which I have no concern, and upon which I desire now to express no opinion."—Oh! say the wise men

of the Association, that means, "the District Committee acted *harshly*. This is a matter with which I have some concern, and upon which I *do* desire now to express my opinion." Now, I do most kindly advise any man who has ever, for one moment, been tempted to harbour such an idea, for the love of himself and for the safety of his friends, to apply to the nearest mad-doctor he can find; at all events, I adjure him never again to attempt a thought about any thing. He is an unaccountable idiot. Why, even the paid fool of the radical household dares not stake his chance of freedom from confinement upon the avowal of such a sentiment. Even he alters the text before he tries his hand at such a perverted comment. Read *his* version. "Whether they acted wisely, temperately, discreetly, or CRUELLY AND *harshly*." I see the motive for the alteration. The unfortunate fellow thought that he must balance epithets; and that it would look odd that, on the one hand, the Chancellor might imply the possibility of the proceedings being both wise, temperate, and discreet; while, on the other, he only threw out the one conjecture that perhaps they were somewhat *harsh*. My wonder is, that he found any difficulty in at once coining a respectable majority of suppositions, cramming them into the Lord Chancellor's mouth, and then quietly standing upon his own most unquestionable reputation for the fidelity of his report.

A third mistake has prevailed as to the concluding paragraph of the Lord Chancellor's judgment. A plain motive for those observations has already been suggested. But there is one still plainer. The eldest son of Dr. Warren partakes the learning, piety, and talents of his father, in, at least, an equal degree. Let there be "no mistake." If there be a difference—I know the parties well—and I solemnly protest that I think the younger the far more learned, pious, and talented of the two. Now, it is matter of common professional gossip, as I am informed, how this son wrote a paper in *Blackwood's Magazine* called "Lords Brougham, Lyndhurst, and Local Courts,"—(by the way, who is Lord Local Courts? Does Mr. Smith, of Stockport, intend to take this title, on account of his patriotic objections to leaders' meetings?)—how that paper, containing eleven invectives against Lord Brougham—fulsome compliments upon the whiteness of Lord Lyndhurst's first finger—and rather meagre, and very hesitating, reasonings upon any legal topic whatever—was reprinted in a separate form; how Lord Lyndhurst once, if not twice, asked the writer to dine with him; and how this same writer, being verily "below the bar," acted, during the recent trials, as the prime prompter and informant of the plaintiff's counsel. It is not strange that, under such circumstances, the Chancellor should express some sympathy with the father of his recent guest, now figuring so unenviably before the court. But what sympathy? "Oh!" he said, "Dr. Warren was the victim of those proceedings." Indeed! Take it that he did so. Who denies it? Dr. Warren *was* the victim of those proceedings; and so will every man be who adopts a similar course.—On your own showing, the Chancellor might be supposed to have said, "I am sorry that Dr. Warren should be hanged (suspended if you like) for sheep stealing." But does he add, "I don't think sheep-stealing an indictable offence"—or, "I regret that sheep-stealing is a capital crime"? But, of course, the assertion made on the other side is false. State fully what the Chancellor did say: "Dr. Warren asserts that he is a very pious and clever gentleman; and I know it, because his son has told me so, and it is not even attempted to be contradicted on the other side. Now, I am very sorry that such a man should suffer, because there is a general dissension in the community of which he was a member. I don't mean to call him a victim, for that term might be misunderstood, as was Dr. Bunting's application to Dr. Warren's former proceedings of the term 'unprincipled'; and I am most anxious to be understood as not pronouncing any opinion upon the *moral merits* of the question, the Vice-Chancellor having settled them, and the appeal to me, as is plain from the arguments of counsel on both sides, being exclusively upon the *law* of the case; and I, therefore, distinctly guard against any false impression being created by my use of the word 'sufferer.' I will not say, for I do not mean, *victim*." Read the Chancellor's words, not as curtailed, but as fully given in his own approved report—"I must again, before concluding, express my great regret at the existence of the dissensions, which have given rise to these proceedings; and from what I have heard, and from what, I may say, I know of the character of Dr. Warren—of his learning, of his piety, of his talents, and of his good conduct, which have been stated on one side, and not even attempted to be contradicted on the other—taking all these things into consideration, I must express my regret that he should be the sufferer—sufferer, I say, arising out of a contest which had originated, as it appears, in the establishment of a particular body, which this society, or a part of this society, thought it right to establish. I express my regret that he should have been the sufferer—I will not say the *victim*, BUT THE SUFFERER—in those proceedings."

Four times does he use the word sufferer. Had he omitted the last qualification, "but the sufferer," the Chancellor's meaning might have been doubtful. As the paragraph stands, it is unquestionable.—Any other interpretation expressly contradicts his repeated assertion, that on such topics nothing should induce him to express an opinion. They were not controverted before him, as they were before the Vice-Chancellor.

One phrase in the paragraph just now quoted, really deserves a passing observation. Dr. Warren's learning, piety, talents, and good conduct *were not even attempted to be contradicted on the other side*. Now not to estimate the merit of such moderation by the usual standards—not to remind the few foolish radicals in the six London circuits how frequently, but how unsuccessfully some of them have been canvassed by Dr. Warren and his private friends, for an invitation to London—not even to remind the insignificant faction at Bury, in Lancashire, how, in spite of Dr. Warren's persevering efforts, just two years, ago, to take the second preacher's place in that circuit, they perseveringly and disdainfully rejected all his overtures—utterly to pass by the history of the stationing committee of 1833, when Dr. Warren *could* and *did* solicit Dr. Bunting for his vote and interest towards an appointment to London, notwithstanding the failure of Dr. Warren's own negotiations; and when such a crowd of memorialists belonging to the Manchester First Circuit, obtested the Conference that they might not be visited with so insupportable an infliction—not to detail Dr. Warren's *very* itinerant course through this large Island, from Brecon to Edinburgh, and from Rochester to Wrexham—one question shall suffice. Do the defendants believe that Dr. Warren is this very learned, pious, talented, and well-behaved gentleman? If they *don't*, why did they not say so? They did not attack him, even in the Vice-Chancellors Court, under all the necessary vexation excited by the unfounded imputations of the plaintiff's counsel. Let him imitate their conduct there. In the Lord Chancellor's Court, they had nothing to do with the character of either party.

—Yours, &c.

TITUS JENKINS.

MISSIONARY NATHANIEL TURNER AND THE ASSOCIATION.

A letter, recently received from an emigrant who is "no Methodist," in Van Dieman's Land, and bearing date, September 7, 1834, contains the following reference to this worthy Cheshire-man, who is now a Wesleyan missionary in Hobart Town. The writer landed with "a solitary eight-pence" in his pocket; but is now in the receipt of a good salary; and acknowledges his obligations to this Wesleyan missionary. "In obtaining this situation, I derived essential benefit from your kind letter of introduction to the Rev. Nathaniel Turner. Indeed, it was the only letter which was of the least service to me." Again—"I have told a long story about myself and situation—to show you how much Mr. Turner is respected here, by all classes, both high and low (and I do not know any person who more deserves to be so), for he is indefatigable, both in his preaching and his endeavours to do good to his fellow-creatures—" The writer does not seem to be aware that the "Grand Central Association," have determined to "stop the supplies;" which means, in plain English, that his friend Turner, and many others like him, are to be starved to death. It is but a few years since this same missionary fell under the suspicion of a "Grand Central Association" of savages, in New Zealand, who thought that he had come there in order to set up a great system of spiritual despotism, and that he had already obtained too much power and wealth; and, therefore, went in a body to the missionary settlement, and demanded "a redress of grievances;" but not receiving satisfaction, proceeded at once to humble him and liberate themselves, by "stopping the supplies." Yet as there happened to be a few Christian people in the country, belonging to the church mission, who were not members of the "association," this excellent man and his family obtained a temporary shelter and a morsel of bread, and he was thus spared to confer further blessings, temporal and spiritual, upon his countrymen, in that distant part of the world.

From "perils among the heathen," his God has already delivered him; and the issue of these "perils among false brethren," will be seen in due time.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"When the Devil was sick, the Devil a monk would be." No sooner did the veritable editors of the *Lantern* feel the force of some remarks which we conceived it to be our duty to make on certain recent events, on the one hand; and, most probably, the reproaches of conscience—because of their own "ineffable hypocrisy" of which they have, again and again, been convicted, at the bar of the public—on the other, than they became *squeamish* and *faint*. "Where there is shame there may, in time, be virtue."—To atone in some degree for the past, and to lead a few easy souls to imagine that they were not so bad as their conduct declares them to be, these editors, much to the surprise of the readers, have *assumed* a tone of piety and tender regard for the sacred truth. This comes, all will acknowledge, with a very ill grace from the professed organ of an Association who, in that vehicle of slander, "*the Catechism*," have given publicity to falsehoods of the basest character, and to misappropriations of God's holy word at which the wildest fanatic and the most ignorant sectary would blush. Why do not the champions of the Association shew themselves to be men worthy of the office they have assumed, and boldly combat the principles we have laid down? Why do they, like mice, spend their time and squander the *twopences* of their deluded admirers by amusing them with nibbling at certain slanderous allegations, men of straw, which they have most ungenerously filiated upon the late Dr. A. Clarke, instead of meeting the questions at issue, as if anxious to arrive at truth? We have thrown down the glove, and have dared them to the combat. If they meet us like men, we will respect them: if not, they will continue the objects of our supreme contempt. By Methodism, grounded on the principles we have declared, we shall stand; and these principles, we are bold to affirm, they dare not attempt to shake, because they know they cannot.

A powerful appeal on behalf of poor Doctor Warren has been made to the liberal public, for pecuniary aid. We fear some of his most boisterous friends are hanging back. We see no account of any donations from his admirers in Liverpool, and imagine that our predictions will be verified. We hope our sapient advocates for Methodist reform will not forsake him in this, his hour of extremity. We especially look to the persons who composed the meeting at the house of Mr. C. Cole, (October 17, 1834,) and call upon them to act consistently: they "pledged themselves to a constant and unwavering determination to hold up the Doctor's hands, by giving him the best support their united energies could devise." Oh the fickleness of human nature! In the published list of subscriptions, we do not even find the name of Mr. C., or any of that *clique*!

We have received from a friend a copy of the "Appeal," issued by the Diss branch of the "Grand Central Association," which we intend to *illuminate* in our ensuing number. It seems that, for some time, the Conference has regularly sent preachers to that circuit, accompanied with an annual grant of money, to supply the "lack" of the good people there. By the blessing of God upon the labours of the preachers sent, and on the charitable contributions of the friends at a distance, the circuit has prospered so as to become independent of the Contingent Fund; and a fine system of moral machinery is now established in that neighbourhood which, with proper attention, will bestow immortal blessings on generations yet unborn. All this now turns out to be such a system of priestly tyranny that a party of the Diss Methodists can bear it no longer, and have accordingly joined the Grand Central, and have resolved at once, to "stop the supplies." Such is their plan of fulfilling the command, "freely ye have received, freely give"! But this is no "new way of paying old debts," for we have heard of persons frequenting particular shops for a long time, until their payments were greatly in arrears, and then settling the accounts by complaining of ill usage, and transferring their custom elsewhere. So much for the generosity and gratitude of a Mr. Gosling and his associates. As to their notions of duty, they seem to think that the work of *tinkering* the constitution of Methodism is of primary and paramount obligation, and therefore that it is to be done *first* and *in person*; but the all-important business of converting and saving the world is secondary and subordinate, and, therefore, is to be attended to *afterwards* and *by proxy*. If our correspondent think it possible for any creature in Norfolk, whether fish or fowl, to mistake this for genuine Wesleyanism, he may command our services as *illuminators*.

Our contemporary is so shocked at the impiety of the *Illuminator*, that he says it makes his "blood run cold." We cannot doubt the *effect*, as every man is a competent judge of his own feelings; but we suspect some little mistake about the *cause*. There is something so much akin to Judas in the act of taking the holy Sacrament with the Methodist preachers, on Sunday, and then going and delivering them up, by wholesale, to the vengeance of the Hull rabble, on Wednesday, that the man who can report such proceedings—not merely with calmness, but evident satisfaction—is not likely to be much shocked by anything in the way of impiety. It is possible, that party spirit may influence his feelings quite as much as religion, and that the judgment of the Court of Chancery has helped to make his "blood run cold." Poor fellow!

Communications have been received from "An Admirer of the Case without a Parallel,"—"Aleph,"—"Epsilon,"—"G. T."—"Titus Jenkins,"—"M. J."—"A Friend to Truth,"—"L."—"Mentor."

Our readers will kindly correct the following *errata*, which escaped detection as the work was going through the press:—In page 95, for "*seven* missionaries," read "*eleven* missionaries;" and in page 112, for "*was uttered*," read "*was said to have been uttered*."

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION ;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES ; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY ; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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REFLECTIONS ON THE ASSOCIATION.

(Concluded from No. 7, p. 102.)

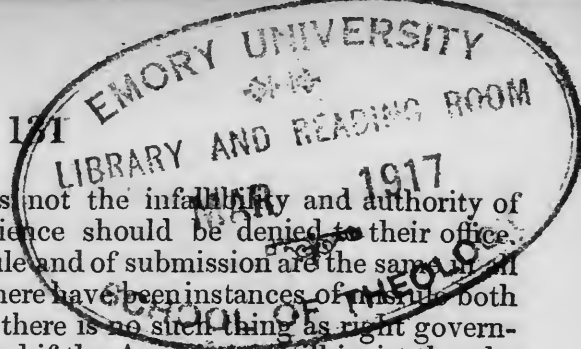
Our *fifth* inquiry has reference to the frequent floundering of the Association, as evidently not based on uniform principles ; and as animated by an improper spirit of violence and contention. We are aware, from the conduct of the party, that this spirit will be retorted on ourselves. We profess not impeccability. If unawares we have been betrayed into wrong statements or wrong tempers, we would wish to be the first to regret and confess it. Of this, however, we are not conscious. But the faults of one side will not quite vindicate those of the other. It is thus the cause of religion suffers while infidels and wicked men exaggerate and laugh to scorn, our mutual recriminations. Who is answerable for such consequences ? To say there are faults on both sides, commonly means just nothing. The question is, where lies the great burden of culpability ? Who began the contest ? And on which side may the greatest number of inconsistencies and improprieties be found ? "The day will declare it." In the mean time, the cause of truth seems to require that systems should, in some degree, be tried by their operation and effects.

We think we see a multitude of discrepancies lying on the extreme surface of the Association. What then may be expected to rest in its depths and foundations ? After all the hostile attacks the Associates have made upon the character and conduct of the preachers, who would expect that they would still persist in hearing them ? They tell the world that no honest man can be a member of our society, and yet refuse to leave us, and are perfectly enraged when they are forced to be honest. They charge the preachers with tyranny on the one hand, or cowardice on the other, and then confess that they have allowed themselves to be dragged into the Association. At one time Mr. Wesley is held up as a noble example and authority, and at another, he is denounced as a weak old man and a despot. The people are not unfrequently exhorted to rise *en masse* and shake off their oppressions ; and, at the same moment, we find it printed all over England, that they bear those burdens with great patience, as they have long done, and that all this is very honourable to

them. That is to say, it is honourable to act in perfect contradiction to the example of the Association. One says, I am sorry I ever joined the Association; I find it hurts my soul, my body, and my business; but he adds, after all I cannot see my way to renounce it. Some say they are miserable because they are Associates; others declare they never were so happy in all their lives; and so said Jonathan Martin while burning down York Minster. Formerly, discussion—public discussion was all the cry; now, since the Leeds meeting, this is by no means allowed. There is also a very curious explanation of what we call the slanders on the characters of the preachers. In the newspapers we find the Association saying, “we do not object to the private, nor even to the public character of the preachers; our objections are confined to their Conferential character.”—It is reported of a bishop of Bristol, who was also a nobleman, that when challenged to fight, he returned—“I cannot fight you as bishop of Bristol; but I will as a lord;” when the reply was—“if then I kill your lordship, pray what will become of the bishop of Bristol?” If the Conferential character be as wicked as is represented, what shall be said of the men? The same accommodating policy is adopted with regard to the late Chancery decision. Had Dr. Warren been the winner, that would have been most famous: hence the great expense and pains taken to effect it. But now, when the judgment is given on the other side, it is just as it ought to be, capital!—the very thing that was wished and wanted!—Thus every thing contributes to the success of the Association. If you throw it into the air, like a *cheval de frise*, it must necessarily fall upon its legs. The Romish church itself can scarcely show any thing more tortuous, more proteus-like, or more in the genuine spirit of Ignatius Loyola, than this same inexpugnable, yet soft, sliding system of tremendous, trembling opposition to the Methodist connexion.

Among the inconsistencies referred to, it is particularly marvellous, that the stopping of supplies should be aimed at the innocent, such as supernumeraries and their widows, and the souls of the heathen, who, at all events, are innocent of Methodism; and that class-money and quarterage, for the support of the work in any given circuit, should be the only money allowed by the rules of the Association: money that is solely applied to support the guilty oppressors who are marked out as the grand objects of indignation and of vengeance. One would rather expect, from the avowed principles of the Association, that poor and unoffending widows, for instance, would meet with some generous attention; and that the wicked preachers alone would be deprived of support. And yet, in perfect contradiction to the practice, the object is to starve the tyrants into compliance with the schemes of the Associates. Oh, error! what a shapeless thing art thou! How many are thy heads, and horns, and hoofs!

We ask, in the *sixth place*, is there any thing in Scripture like the Association? Yes: the Corinthian faction was extremely like it. The malcontents described by St. Jude, very much resemble it; at least, in certain parts of the description given by that Apostle; and Diotrephes would have made a first-rate member of the Association. Among these we find there were “debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults.” They “despised dominion” and “spoke evil of things which they knew not.” These statements of conduct are also disclosures of the principles on which that conduct was founded. The men were influenced by “envyings,” and “loved to have the pre-eminence.”



That modern ministers profess not the infallibility and authority of Apostles is no reason why obedience should be denied to their office. The grand principles of pastoral rule and of submission are the same in all ages of the church. And because there have been instances of misrule both in church and state, must we say there is no such thing as right government remaining in the world? And if the Association still insist that the connexion at large is in the wrong, and they themselves in the right, we reply, that this again begs the question. Who shall decide between us? Must the whole body bend to the dictates of a few? The Associates know that if all the parties met in one vast multitude on Salisbury plain, to discuss and determine the questions betwixt us, the Association would be like the gleanings of the vintage, compared with the hundreds of thousands opposed to them. But, no doubt, they rank themselves with the small, but noble band of heroes at Thermopylæ; and look upon the army of a Xerxes as the certain prey of their well-trying power and valour.

On the subject of disregard to pastoral authority, we would recommend the remarks of the Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham, to the notice of the Association. As proceeding from the pen of an eminent Dissenting minister, they may have more weight than if they had been advanced by some tyrannical Methodist preacher:—"It is my decided conviction, that, in many of our churches, the pastor is depressed far below his just level. He is considered merely in the light of a speaking brother. He has no official distinction or authority. He may flatter like a sycophant, he may beg like a servant, he may woo like a lover, but he is not permitted to enjoin like a ruler. His opinion is received with no deference, his person treated with no respect; and in the presence of some of his lay tyrants, if he say any thing at all, it must be somewhat similar to the ancient soothsayers; for he is only permitted to peep and mutter from the dust. The tyranny of a minister has some shadow of excuse in the circumstance of his being invested with an office, the duties of which are not defined with accuracy; but the tyranny of a church over their pastor is without apology, for *they have no office and therefore no power.*"—See *On Christian Fellowship*, second edition, p. 60.

The precise duties, both of the pastor and the people, have, no doubt, in many cases, been left undefined; perhaps, with the intention to leave more room for the exercise of the Christian graces, which, when they freely operate, will be sure to set all right, without any profound process of conflicting argumentation. We admit that all parties ought impartially to examine themselves on this point. And while we call our own hearts to this personal inquiry, so far as the spirit of our resistance is concerned, we take the liberty to ask the members of the Association to inquire into the manner in which they have made and carried on the attack. The public, at least, will judge by their overt acts, whether due Christian diffidence of themselves, meekness, gentleness, humility, and teachableness—all springing from the hallowed fountain of supreme love to God, and to man, not excepting, of course, their cruel task-masters, have shone out very conspicuously in their part of this great conflict. We confess, we see very little of these virtues in the various transactions of the Association. We think we see much, very much, of a contrary character; though this charge we rather confine to the leaders of the ring than extend it to the body of their deluded followers, many of whom, indeed, have but very little to do in the active operations of the party.

An uncandid and unkind bias of the heart is, we think, evinced in almost every step of their procedure. This is at once unscriptural and unmanly. They have not dwelt upon the excellencies of church government amongst us in any due proportion, as compared with our alleged corruptions. A stranger to Methodism reading their productions, would be inclined to think that the evils of the system vastly preponderate, for the Associates have taken care not to strike the balance. Nor have they come to the subject of reform, as Burke says the evils of the state should be approached—"with tenderness, as to the wounds of a father;" but with a recklessness that seems to merge all regard for the feelings of others. They have dashed into the controversy as if they took a real pleasure in it: as if garbage were their sweetest food, and the faults of others the most delightful objects of their contemplation; and all these alleged corruptions are, in perfect opposition to the genius of Christianity and of Methodism, dragged before the world, obliging their brethren to follow them to detect their misconceptions.

These reflections, it is obvious, might be continued to a much greater length. We might illustrate the subject, for example, by referring to a number of similar instances of factious hostility, and utter failures in the end—except so far as regards a mischievous and cruel rending of unity and affection among Christian brethren—recorded in church history. We might inquire whether the Association, as either *ipso facto*, or by rule, expelled from fellowship with their brethren, can be considered as a church at all; for they have not yet joined any other Christian body; and remain without chapels, and ministers, and ordinances; thus manifesting a mistaken or proud antipathy to the whole Christian world; because the whole, themselves excepted, is supposed, of course, to be essentially defective or corrupt. But we conclude for the present. We have not, in this article, extended our remarks to the questions of church government debated by the parties; but have chiefly confined them to the single fact of a coercive combination formed to carry its intentions into effect by the unusual and unlawful methods by which its conduct is so avowedly and notoriously marked; a combination begging the question, as we have said, and practically assuming that the question is no question; that no argument is necessary to be used on either side; and that, therefore, the whole connexion opposed to them is the rebellious party, and ought at once to submit to the infallible dictation of the Associates. Whether the Conference be right or wrong makes no difference as to the character of this self-elected junto of censors, under the sanctimonious name of Christian reformers.

From the hints contained in these brief reflections, whether taken as a whole, or viewed in their several particulars; if they be correct in substance, and not a perfect tissue of falsehoods and of nonsense; we think it will appear to all impartial judges, that the Association, *as such*, is utterly indefensible. Viewed in all its aspects, it is still a distortion, otherwise our vision is most lamentably distorted, which we know will be asserted by our opponents as the fact, beyond all doubt. The variety of points in which we have looked at the Association, all of them harmonizing in the same unfavourable conclusion, has, to our own minds at least, something of the form of truth and argument. Let the Christian public judge between us. With such an authority we can confidently trust the question.

May we be permitted, *finally*, to ask, what are the probable effects to result from the Association? On this subject many fine things are predicted by its members. Nay, the future is become matter of history rather than of prophecy. Hence we read in printed placards—"Monstrous Methodism *is* no more!" On their principles they may predict with perfect safety. For, success, or no success, they must succeed. The grand catastrophe will always be either come or coming. But we will also take the liberty of prophesying. The Association, we believe, will secure its own defeat. The men are not the persons likely to accomplish our reform—if reform be really wanted. A very different class of individuals must undertake the work. This, however, it will be said, is matter of opinion. Be it so; time will shortly determine. In the meanwhile, the spiritual interests of numbers are suffering. Several members of the Association confessed to a clergyman the other day, that they were losing their religion. This, we fear, implies a similar state of things with regard to many more. Nor will the controversies into which the connexion is forced be very favorable to the piety of some of its loyal members. It is for the Association to ascertain, whether their supposed reforms are worth this mighty sacrifice. The injury done to the usefulness of the preachers, through indecent attacks upon their character and office, is another of the mischievous consequences of this business.

But good effects will also incidentally and providentially ensue. It is earnestly to be desired that the body of the Association will yet return to their allegiance; but a certain class, who have, for many years, been thorns in the sides of the church, are now happily separated from us; and, it is hoped, may never be permitted to resume their power of doing mischief. The preachers will be led to observe a stricter caution in putting men into office. Measures also may possibly be adopted by the Conference to prevent the recurrence of such revolutionary opposition. Our sound brethren will be more confirmed in their principles, and by a happy reaction exert themselves more than ever to defend and support the connexion. Discipline will be more diligently studied, and better understood. And the body at large will now probably set a higher value on their Christian privileges than they have ever done, and be far more indefatigable in the improvement and extension of them. These consequences we deem to be inestimable. But no thanks to the Association. Thanks be to Him alone, of whom it is most justly said, "surely the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."

THE NEW CONNEXION AND ITS THEOLOGY.

Once more do we reiterate the assertion that the venerable Wesley was under the guidance of "the Father of lights" when he, by the Deed of Declaration, legally prevented the introduction of lay delegates into Conference. We will assign a *third* reason for our position. By the exclusion of lay delegation, *he greatly contributed to the preservation of ORTHODOXY in the connexion.*

The Methodist society was established in 1739; and though nearly a century has since gone into eternity, Wesleyan theology exists in all its purity and unction in the body. Its doctrines were never more

clearly understood, firmly believed, and faithfully preached than they are at this day. Attempts, indeed, have been made, at sundry times, to corrupt and neutralize them; but they have been powerfully and effectually resisted. This wholesome resistance to heresy would, we believe, have been much less powerful and, consequently, much less effectual, had the connexion been under the rule of the laity. *Lay influence when it rises into domination in the church, is perilous to sound doctrine.* Is not this principle corroborated by truly painful facts?

The Presbyterian churches in England admitted the order of lay eldership, and what has been the result? They have, scarcely without an exception, "denied the faith once delivered unto the saints." It is not difficult to account for this melancholy issue of an earthly policy. Heresy never comes on an orthodox church with all the instantaneous sweep of a flood. No. It is usually so small in its commencement, and so cautious in its progress, that some laymen want discernment, some want spirituality, and others want courage to qualify them to raise against its intrusion a vigorous and effective opposition; and when they have once, by a misplaced lenity, indulged heterodoxy, it necessarily becomes a growing evil. The Socinianism into which the Presbyterian churches have sunk, admonishes the laity of every church not to aspire after offices which God has never required them to fill, especially such as examining the theological sentiments of candidates for the ministry, and "separating them for the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them."

Knowing that the New Connexion has made one of the most recent trials of the secular and pastoral character, in the government of the church, we honestly confess that we have fears lest there should be a *deterioration* of Methodist divinity in that community. We admit that an itinerant ministry is the least exposed to corruption; for "running streams are not so apt to corrupt; nor itinerant as settled preachers:" still there is a liability to error, even among travelling preachers, which calls for the watchfulness of a godly jealousy. Convinced there is danger of the New Connexion, from its being principally a lay government, departing from the faith, we have carefully examined its "form of doctrine," as appended to the general rules, to see whether its several articles are so strictly guarded in their expression as to constitute some strong barrier in the way of any heretical innovation. The investigation has painfully disappointed us.

Certain doctrines, deemed, by *right-hearted* Methodists, of great consequence, are so vaguely worded that it would appear as if persons of very different sentiments may gain access to the ministry among this body of Christians. If we were to be told, or if any of our readers were to say that they have been told, that doctrines, both Wesleyan and anti-Wesleyan, are to be heard from some of their pulpits, the announcement would not in the least surprise us. To justify these sayings, we will lay before our readers that part of their creed which relates to two important Methodist doctrines, viz.—the Witness of the Spirit, and Christian Perfection.

It reads as follows:—"6. We believe that justification is by grace, through faith, and he that believeth hath the witness in himself; that it is our privilege to be fully sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God."—The believer is here said to have the witness in himself; but what *kind*? Is it *divine* or *human*? *Direct*

or *indirect*? Again: it is the privilege of Christians to be fully sanctified; but when? Is it a privilege for *present* or *future* attainment? To these serious questions the article makes no response. How dangerously liberal are these doctrines in their construction!

The preachers of this community, when received into full connexion, are required to give, in the presence of the congregation, a statement of the principles which they believe and teach. As some of them choose to comply with this requirement by simply reading over the doctrines, just as their secular and spiritual governors have compiled them, it is evident they may, or they may *not*, be sound in Methodist theology. We know too much of human nature, and of ecclesiastical history, to believe that ministers whose sentiments are so loosely examined, are likely to preserve in their ministrations "the unity of the faith."

The creed of the New Connexion, unlike the Nicene and Athanasian creeds, makes no mention of the divine Sonship of the second person in the holy Trinity. Whether the title Son of God marks his *natural* relation to the Father, or his *official* relation to men, is a question so important that it ought not to have been passed over in silence. Some persons have gloried that, on this point, they have no "Test Act;" but to such we would say, "your glorying is not good." Genuine Methodism is, emphatically, *a testing system*; and when religious teachers so grow in liberalism as to treat doctrinal tests with contempt, we need not be informed to what *bound* they are travelling.

Though the eternal Sonship is not to be found in the creed of the body, yet we are thankful to know it is in several of Mr. Wesley's hymns, which the congregations sometimes chant in the solemn worship of Almighty God. The Rev. A. Scott, who has long ornamented the New Connexion as a sound theologian, has published a tract on the divine Sonship, which, for so small a work, is a masterly performance. He proves the doctrine to be according to the scriptures, shows its importance in the Christian system, and justifies the Wesleyan Conference in requiring its avowed belief from all ministerial candidates. This excellent and well-timed publication was most favourably reviewed in the New Methodist Magazine. The same respectable author has compiled a catechism, in which children are taught in the full sense of the passage to "honour the Son even as they honour the Father;" and this form of sound words is said to have received the sanction of the Conference.

Notwithstanding these facts, Mr. Forsyth, who believes the doctrine to be unreasonable, unscriptural, and mischievous; and *who declares it is with him a point of conscience thus to denounce it in his ministrations*, is understood to be virtually received as a travelling preacher in the New Connexion!

Some of our readers may inquire, by whom has he been accepted? We reply—an oligarchy, called, "the annual committee." It consists of *five* persons, and it is a great part of their duty to promote the enlargement of the Connexion; not by sending forth men "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith," to prophesy to the dry bones in some neglected parts of the valley of death; no—it is by *negotiating with the disaffected and insubordinate members of other churches*! When Zion is generally in peace and prosperity, this committee has little employment; but when multitudes are weeping, between the porch and the altar, over agitation and antinomianism among professors of religion, this committee reaps an harvest!

The corresponding member of this committee for the present year is a superannuated minister. Such was our respect for his talents and character, we were truly sorry to see him laid aside from the work of the ministry, and we cordially desired his last days to be full of peace and honour. But the manner in which he has latterly chosen to come before the public, has both surprised and pained us. The bitter hostility which he has manifested towards the Wesleyan body—the unfounded reproaches which, from the worst of publications, he has taken up against her ministers—the party zeal which he has evinced in “compassing sea and land to make proselytes,” may have raised him in the estimation of a fraternity of bigots; but among sober Christians, both in his own and in other communities, they have produced a different effect. We would still hope, however, that ere long he will see the evil of his recent proceedings, and will, “in a more excellent way,” endeavour to promote the tranquillity and enlargement of the church of God.

It is pleasing to know that all the members of the New Connexion do not glory in the accession of Mr. Forsyth and his partizans to the body. Some of them believe that for itinerant ministers to contradict one another in the pulpit, will never answer, inasmuch as such contradictions must generate strife and division, both among preachers and people. It is easy to see that this unhappy state of things must be the result. Moreover, if the New Connexion is to have a “yea and nay” ministry on one doctrine, why not “yea and nay” on a *second*, and a *third* until the Connexion is ruined? Intelligent members seeing the danger, have asserted, “that if the arrangements made by the annual committee be ratified at the ensuing Conference, they shall consider the door opened for Socinianism into the Connexion.” Many other Christians will come to the same conclusion; but not with pleasure. No!—The ardent love of truth which distinguishes the Wesleyan Methodists leads them to deprecate any branch of the Methodist family becoming Socinianized. It is, we regret to say, in our power to give instances of the New Connexion preachers who, under its liberal polity, have grown so lax in their principles, that they have abandoned its itinerancy, and taken the oversight of Socinian congregations! May their number never increase! To prevent such an addition of heretical apostates, we believe it highly necessary that the negotiation of the annual committee should, at the forthcoming Conference, be *quashed*!

But such an event, though of immense importance, is, we apprehend, more to be wished than expected; for *the negociators belong to a ruling junta in the Connexion*! As so many of the preachers and delegates who attend the Conference are, either from their juniority or their first elections, mere novices in ecclesiastical legislation; almost the whole power of the assembly is wielded by the minority, who, by some means, so manage matters as to be nearly always present; and to distribute the offices and committee business of the body *chiefly among themselves*.*

* If any person desire proof of this statement, let them read the Minutes, and they will frequently meet with the same names associated with offices and committees. It is a trite saying, that “when a party is in power it naturally endeavours to strengthen itself.” This remark fully applies to the ascendant few in the New Connexion. The Minutes of 1834, contain a deep scheme, which, there is little doubt, has emanated from these rulers in Israel who have proclaimed war against all tyranny, except, of course, that which may be found nearest home! It is a proposal that the annual com-

It is almost certain how this dominant party will speak and vote in Conference, on the conduct of the committee in reference to Gateshead. Mr. Scott may raise his voice against it, and produce strong reasons why the *un-Methodistical* treaty should be rejected; but we fear he will be "as one who beateth the air," and his best arguments like seed scattered upon a rock. Great anxiety, especially among the merchants and tradesmen, to keep up the appearance of "unparalleled prosperity," by swelling the number of the connexion, though it may be with persons of different creeds, will bear down all objections; and the triumph will probably be celebrated according to the form of the second resolution, in the Minutes of 1834;—

"That it is with feelings of sincerest gratitude to God, the source of truth and grace, the Conference has received information respecting the spread of liberal principles of church government."†

It is only justice to the New Connexion to state, before we close these remarks, that we found subjoined to the doctrinal propositions, a reference made to the sermons and notes of the Rev. J. Wesley, as illustrating their character. There are persons who may think that this reference ought to have shielded the creed from some of our strictures; and indeed it would, had we not found it so liberal as to be most seriously defective. It is, in the new system, *unauthoritative*; and, consequently, to a great extent, *uninfluencing*. We have read the Minutes and general rules; we have conversed with members of the body; but we cannot find any law, neither can we learn there is any usage which *binds* the preachers to read

mittee shall, in future, consist of thirteen individuals who shall be members of Conference at the end of the year for which they have served; and that the Treasurers of the Paternal, Beneficent and Missionary Funds, the Book Steward, the Treasurer of the Book Room, and the Missionary Secretary, shall be *ex-officio* members of the annual committee. These several posts of honour and influence are, from year to year, commonly occupied by the *same persons*; and now, it would appear, they aspire to be *de facto* the *standing government* of the body! They wish to be *ex-officio* members of the committee that rules over the Connexion during the intervals of Conference; and then to be *ex-officio* members of Conference, where they can sway their sceptre over all the newly elected delegates! Yet these oligarchists love liberty and hate tyranny, both in church and state, with all their hearts! This snug plan for the permanent aggrandisement of the aristocracy in the New Connexion, was to be laid before the quarterly meetings in January last, under the imposing pretext of opening the doors of Conference to the prayers, councils, and votes, of a few hoary-headed supernumeraries, who, for many years, have been vainly praying for admission. It is intended to give some of these veterans of Jesus Christ a place among the thirteen, and so pass them, *ex-officio* into Conference! We wish our *illumination* of this enslaving scheme of a *clique* of *liberals* might be seen through all the length and breadth of the New Connexion. If the people do not rise up and crush it, let them give up their boasts of liberty for ever; and no more of their trumpeting!

† This most singular tribute of Conference thanksgiving refers to the diffusion of republican principles in some American churches. What relation the spread of these levelling politics among Christians has to "the truth and grace of God," for which He is to be worshipped, we are at a loss to conceive. The resolution rather tempts us to think that there are persons who take a more lively interest in the *republicanization* of the church of the Redeemer, than in the conversion of the world to his authority. Hence the great zeal which the New Connexion manifests, by means of political tracts and speeches, to make people into ecclesiastical politicians; and the little zeal it has manifested by missionary labours of love, to make sinners into saints! As the body wishes to change its title and adopt one more expressive of its character, there is a most appropriate appellation for it which we might suggest did we think it necessary. "A word to the wise is sufficient."

the standard writings of Wesleyan theology, and *requires* them to declare that they cordially believe every part of the creed as it is therein illustrated. We have, indeed, in our researches, met with one fact which, to us, is remarkable, and yet characteristic of the system: every preacher is annually tested in drawing up his testimonial which is taken to Conference, on all points, *doctrines excepted!*

As certain characters in the New Connexion have assumed the office of reforming the Wesleyan body, we submit to their consideration whether they had not better, henceforth, leave the latter to itself, and employ their reforming talents in their own community. If they will "suffer the word of exhortation," we would say, jealously watch your system; *apply some salutary reforms to it*; lest, in its workings, all that is vital and distinguishing in Christianity be ultimately swept away. We can assure them it is our wish that the New community may "be in health and prosper" in the salvation of sinners; and it shall be our prayer, that both connexions, in all things essential to life and godliness, may have "one Lord, one faith, one baptism;" and, also, that the time may shortly come when "Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim." Amen.

EPSILON.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE DISS BRANCH ASSOCIATION!!

We know of nothing so detrimental to the best interests of the religious public, and so utterly opposed to the principles and maxims of the sacred scriptures, than for Christian societies to be found neither in communion with each other, nor in a state for such communion. Schism in the mystical body of our Redeemer is deeply to be deplored, as pregnant with evil of the most awful character; the bond of charity is dissolved—infidels are supplied with the most plausible terms of invective—the consciences of the irreligious are hardened—the hands of the good are weakened and hang down—the efficacy of prayer is fearfully impeded—and, as the Holy spirit, with His gracious influences, is promised in answer to the united entreaties of the militant church, where the fiend of discord reigns, the angel of peace and unity has fled, and that divine power, without which nothing is wise, holy, or strong, is withheld.

It was only the other day that we obtained sight of a *precious* document, entitled "An appeal to the members of the Wesleyan Methodist societies in the Diss circuit," and which professes to emanate from the members of the Diss branch of the Manchester Central Association!!" It bears the name of "Thomas Gosling, Secretary," to whose hands, it appears, this "appeal" came, "cut and dried;" for as one born out of due time, Mr. G. was elected to the *honourable* office of secretary, on the eve of its publication, his predecessor feeling some awkward qualms of conscience concerning the propriety of his conduct, was led to refuse appending his name to this production, and ultimately to bid *good night* to this band of Norfolk reformers. Mr. Gosling, therefore, without much difficulty *flew* upon the *saddle* the ex-secretary had occupied. A very ominous event truly, as it respected the fate of this branch Association!

The origin of this *far-famed* company of Associates ought not to be overlooked, inasmuch as it is another proof how "some men," who "are singularly fitted for great actions, and superior to discouragement, can

press through difficulties which to others appear to be insurmountable!" Who would have thought of a branch Association at Diss, a circuit which has received, to our certain knowledge, from the contingent fund of the connexion alone, upwards of £700 in order to meet its ordinary necessities, to say nothing at the present of the grants which have been made to it for extraordinary deficiencies, and from the children's fund! By the blessing of God on the labours of the preachers who have been stationed there, and on the liberality and public spirit of the body, the Diss circuit has become independent of the contingent fund, and, therefore, to evince their gratitude, one of the first steps a few persons have taken, is to exhort the members of the society, to cease all contributions to a fund by which other circuits would be similarly benefited! The English language is destitute of a word which sufficiently expresses the sense we entertain of such a nefarious transaction; and we are powerfully reminded of what is said of the eagle in the Greek apologue:

"The eagle saw her breast was wounded sore,
She stood, and wept much, but grieved more;
For when she saw the dart was feathered, said—
'Ah! woe is me, my kind hath me destroyed.'"

We are well convinced that ever since the memorable Leeds affair, when those highly salutary and strictly constitutional measures were successfully taken to put down an insolent and illegal faction, which threatened destruction to Methodism in one of its most interesting and venerable societies, there have been a *few* discontented *creatures* in Diss and its neighbourhood, who have now and then displayed much disaffection toward the constitution of our body. These, under the influence of an unhallowed excitement produced by the circumstances in which *poor* Dr. Warren has been placed, assembled, about a dozen in number, around the fire-side of a friend, where they concocted, and *then* and *there* formed themselves into the Diss Branch Association. Four out of this *paltry* number forsook this *gostling* Association almost as soon as they had joined it, and the remainder, being thrown upon their mettle at the appearance of the well-timed declaration of the preachers of the Norwich district, circulated the "appeal," which now lies before us. So much for the history of this *trumpery* production!

But what has the Association of Diss done? What have these reforming worthies effected? Why, their "Appeal" has produced the very opposite effect to that which they contemplated! The missionary collections have exceeded those of the past year by £20; and all the other contributions bear a proportionate advance. The various officers, in conjunction with the excellent preachers, have attended to the work of God, and God has eminently blessed them; they having had an accession to the society, since the last Conference (those on trial included), of 200 members. The prospects of Methodism in that circuit were never so cheering as at present. The beautiful new chapel in the town is crowded with attentive hearers; two chapels in other parts of that circuit have been recently opened, and the friends are about enlarging two others. At such indications of prosperity of the very best kind, we are not surprised; nor do we *regret* to learn that this insignificant confederacy has sickened, and GIVEN UP THE GHOST!

"In our own quagmire 'tis provoking,
That folks should think to stop our croaking;
Sons of the swamp, with lungs of leather,
Now is our time to screech together!"—ARISTOPH.

With mingled sensations of indignation and sorrow have we brought this "Appeal" before our readers. Indignation, on beholding two or three obscure individuals of the Diss circuit, consummately ignorant of the principles of the Wesleyan constitution, arrogating to themselves the task of *mending* rules which our venerable founder enjoined them rather to *keep*, and becoming the wilful instruments of decoying from their spiritual enjoyments a few—and we are thankful, *but a few*—misguided persons: we also feel sorrow, that even *a few* were induced, by the fair speeches and deceitful words of designing men, to manifest dissatisfaction and distrust with the Conference, whose good faith and integrity in the estimation of the connexion is triumphant—a want of attachment toward those who were over them in the Lord, and a reckless determination to root up the vine and the fig tree, under which their fathers have pleasantly and profitably sat. With the venerable established church, we pray—"That it may please Thee to bring into the way of truth all such as have erred and are deceived. That it may please Thee to forgive our enemies, persecutors, and SLANDERERS, and to turn their hearts."

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

On marking the progress of the schism which has recently occurred in the Methodist connexion, I have been led to reflect a little on its rise, its progress, its present state, and the probable results. A few remarks on each of those subjects may be of some importance; and these I wish to state in as clear, calm, and dispassionate a manner as possible.

Although the apparent commencement of it was like the bursting forth of a volcano, immediately after the publication of Dr. Warren's pamphlet, and his consequent and merited suspension by the Manchester District Meeting, yet I am of opinion, that the fire had long been burning underneath, and that if the Dr.'s affair had not occurred, some other event, equally casual, would have led to a similar explosion. I need only refer to a few facts in proof of the above statement. In the town of Liverpool, some of the very men who are at the head of the Association faction, for about three years, conducted and published a monthly Circular, in which all the slander and vituperation which could be collected against a few of the preachers individually, and the Conference generally, were monthly circulated through the nation. Those persons had for several years been endeavouring, not only to prejudice the Liverpool people against the Conference, but to spread similar principles far and wide.

In Manchester there had also been a factious spirit among a few of the leaders; and though, many years ago, several of them left the connexion, at the time of Mr. Broadhurst's division, there were others who continued in the body, and were constant sources of trouble to the preachers and to the sound part of the society, both in the leaders' and in the quarterly meetings.

At the time when the cholera was so prevalent and also so fatal in the Collieries of Staffordshire, the Lord began a very gracious work in Dudley, and there was a pleasing prospect of great and lasting good; but, alas! the leading people of the society plunged into the gulf of radical politics, the progress of the work of God was arrested, and many of the members were prepared to introduce their political revolutionary zeal into the church of God.

For a number of years the Whitehaven society has been in an unsettled state; and such was the reforming mania of many of the leaders at Todmorden that, at a quarterly meeting about a year ago, after settling the business of their own circuit, they proceeded to adjust the affairs of church and state at large. The more carefully I examine into the previous state of those societies which are now disturbed, the more clearly does it appear, that a spirit of restless discontent and disaffection has prevailed among them for some years prior to the present agitation.

When the Association was formed in Manchester and Liverpool, its members declared to the world that they wanted nothing NEW; while at the same time they were publishing, that, as Methodism is now constituted, no honest and upright man could re-

main in connexion with it. In a short period their scheme began to develop itself. It was demanded that the preachers should vote by ballot! Then, that persons should be admitted into the Conference by tickets! Then was broached the grand remedy for all Methodistical evil, that one hundred lay delegates should be sent annually from one hundred of the principal towns of the kingdom; and that each delegate shall be the man of the people; or, to use the Association's phrase, the "people's man." Very shortly, they altered their scheme of members being admitted by ticket, and declared that the Conference shall be opened to the Methodist public, who must be admitted as spectators! And, then, they determined to have a new "Plan of Pacification!" Another projected alteration is, that whatever resolution any person may choose to propose, whether in a leaders' or quarterly meeting, the chairman shall be obliged to put it to the vote, or he must vacate the chair! Another proposition is, that certain preachers shall be brought to undergo punishment, or to use their own expression—"made an example of," so as to deter any other preacher from ever following their steps! Another of their projects is, that the theological institution shall be suppressed! And the last of their statements to which I shall refer is, "that as a minister may preach sound theological sermons, yea, even preach like an angel, it is not impossible that all the while he may be as full of ambition and of pride as the devil!" And for fear that any of their readers should take it hypothetically, as a thing within the reach of possibility, but not probable, they add, "this is matter of fact!" They most devoutly wish to guard the Methodists against being prejudiced in favour of the preachers, as this is the effect of ignorance, or a consequence of mental infirmity!

Such, then, are some of the present avowed projects of the Association; what farther measures may be resolved upon by them before the Conference, may assemble, time alone can develop. But taking our stand according to the present position of affairs, it becomes a serious enquiry as to what will be the duty of the Conference, and whether the present schism or separation is likely to be healed.

The inquiry becomes the more important at the present time, because of the delusion practised on our people by the active members of the Association. The people are very gravely informed that, though they receive the Association tickets—which, in Liverpool, are signed by the leading characters of the Association—they are still *true* members of the Methodist society; that they have no reason to doubt but that the Conference will grant their requests; for, according to their own statements, they are so perfectly reasonable, and so small in magnitude, that it would be utterly wrong for the Conference to deny them!! And thus many are led into the snare, who imagine that they are only making a proper stand for their rights, and that in a few months all will be very comfortably and amicably settled.

I shall not now enter upon the subject of the late reckless attempt by that body, with Dr. Warren as their tool, to endeavour by an appeal to Chancery, and by one sweeping measure to prove—what the Association have frequently asserted—that we have no laws which are binding. More than three months ago, one of the Liverpool associates* declared that an appeal would be made to the Lord Chancellor; and if the Lord Chancellor had ejected Mr. Newton, and replaced Dr. Warren, then, as a matter of course, Mr. Jackson must have reinstated Mr. Barnes and Mr. Rowland; Mr. Marsden must have replaced Mr. Joyce and Mr. Beynon, and all the adherents of each party, on the North and South of Liverpool. In Manchester, it would not have been left to Mr. Newton to replace Messrs. Wood, Hull, Mayor, and Co.; but, with the Doctor at their head, all must have resumed their old places and offices. However, I leave that subject, and proceed to inquire what will be the probable plan of the ensuing Conference; or, at least, what appears at present to be the result of the schism, as it respects the Conference.

It may be inquired, can the Conference at all enter into any treaty with the ringleaders of the Association? To answer that question, it is proper to inquire into the nature of their present position. They have their separate places of worship; they have their own classes, prayer-meetings, band-meetings, and lovefeasts; they have their quarterly meetings, they receive and pay their monies, and they have their own tickets. They affirm that they are still members of the Methodist society, though they have now no connexion with it. However, as they have published to the world "that they are singularly fitted for great actions, and pass through difficulties which to others appear insurmountable," I readily suppose that they can very easily reconcile

* Our respected correspondent alludes to the *valiant* chairman of the Liverpool Association, who in his *gunpowder* zeal in the cause of Methodist reform, very *devoutly* challenged W. G. Scarth Esq., of Leeds, to fight a duel!—Ed.

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At the time when the cholera was so prevalent and also so fatal in the Collieries of Staffordshire, the Lord began a very gracious work in Dudley, and there was a pleasing prospect of great and lasting good; but, alas! the leading people of the society plunged into the gulf of radical politics, the progress of the work of God was arrested, and many of the members were prepared to introduce their political revolutionary zeal into the church of God.

For a number of years the Whitehaven society has been in an unsettled state; and such was the reforming mania of many of the leaders at Todmorden that, at a quarterly meeting about a year ago, after settling the business of their own circuit, they proceeded to adjust the affairs of church and state at large. The more carefully I examine into the previous state of those societies which are now disturbed, the more clearly does it appear, that a spirit of restless discontent and disaffection has prevailed among them for some years prior to the present agitation.

When the Association was formed in Manchester and Liverpool, its members declared to the world that they wanted nothing NEW; while at the same time they were publishing, that, as Methodism is now constituted, no honest and upright man could re-

main in connexion with it. In a short period their scheme began to develop itself. It was demanded that the preachers should vote by ballot! Then, that persons should be admitted into the Conference by tickets! Then was broached the grand remedy for all Methodistical evil, that one hundred lay delegates should be sent annually from one hundred of the principal towns of the kingdom; and that each delegate shall be the man of the people; or, to use the Association's phrase, the "people's man." Very shortly, they altered their scheme of members being admitted by ticket, and declared that the Conference shall be opened to the Methodist public, who must be admitted as spectators! And, then, they determined to have a new "Plan of Pacification!" Another projected alteration is, that whatever resolution any person may choose to propose, whether in a leaders' or quarterly meeting, the chairman shall be obliged to put it to the vote, or he must vacate the chair! Another proposition is, that certain preachers shall be brought to undergo punishment, or to use their own expression—"made an example of," so as to deter any other preacher from ever following their steps! Another of their projects is, that the theological institution shall be suppressed! And the last of their statements to which I shall refer is, "that as a minister may preach sound theological sermons, yea, even preach like an angel, it is not impossible that all the while he may be as full of ambition and of pride as the devil!" And for fear that any of their readers should take it hypothetically, as a thing within the reach of possibility, but not probable, they add, "this is matter of fact!" They most devoutly wish to guard the Methodists against being prejudiced in favour of the preachers, as this is the effect of ignorance, or a consequence of mental infirmity!

Such, then, are some of the present avowed projects of the Association; what farther measures may be resolved upon by them before the Conference, may assemble, time alone can develop. But taking our stand according to the present position of affairs, it becomes a serious enquiry as to what will be the duty of the Conference, and whether the present schism or separation is likely to be healed.

The inquiry becomes the more important at the present time, because of the delusion practised on our people by the active members of the Association. The people are very gravely informed that, though they receive the Association tickets—which, in Liverpool, are signed by the leading characters of the Association—they are still *true* members of the Methodist society; that they have no reason to doubt but that the Conference will grant their requests; for, according to their own statements, they are so perfectly reasonable, and so small in magnitude, that it would be utterly wrong for the Conference to deny them!! And thus many are led into the snare, who imagine that they are only making a proper stand for their rights, and that in a few months all will be very comfortably and amicably settled.

I shall not now enter upon the subject of the late reckless attempt by that body, with Dr. Warren as their tool, to endeavour by an appeal to Chancery, and by one sweeping measure to prove—what the Association have frequently asserted—that we have no laws which are binding. More than three months ago, one of the Liverpool associates* declared that an appeal would be made to the Lord Chancellor; and if the Lord Chancellor had ejected Mr. Newton, and replaced Dr. Warren, then, as a matter of course, Mr. Jackson must have reinstated Mr. Barnes and Mr. Rowland; Mr. Marsden must have replaced Mr. Joyce and Mr. Beynon, and all the adherents of each party, on the North and South of Liverpool. In Manchester, it would not have been left to Mr. Newton to replace Messrs. Wood, Hull, Mayor, and Co.; but, with the Doctor at their head, all must have resumed their old places and offices. However, I leave that subject, and proceed to inquire what will be the probable plan of the ensuing Conference; or, at least, what appears at present to be the result of the schism, as it respects the Conference.

It may be inquired, can the Conference at all enter into any treaty with the ringleaders of the Association? To answer that question, it is proper to inquire into the nature of their present position. They have their separate places of worship; they have their own classes, prayer-meetings, band-meetings, and lovefeasts; they have their quarterly meetings, they receive and pay their monies, and they have their own tickets. They affirm that they are still members of the Methodist society, though they have now no connexion with it. However, as they have published to the world "that they are singularly fitted for great actions, and pass through difficulties which to others appear insurmountable," I readily suppose that they can very easily reconcile

* Our respected correspondent alludes to the *valiant* chairman of the Liverpool Association, who in his *gunpowder* zeal in the cause of Methodist reform, very *devoutly* challenged W. G. Scarth Esq., of Leeds, to fight a duel!—Ed.

those seeming contradictions. To accomplish their designs further, they have announced to the world, that so far as their influence extends, they will stop all the supplies to the chief funds of the Methodist connexion. They profess to have an object to accomplish, and until it shall be effected, the trustees may sink under embarrassments, and starve in a debtors' jail; the preachers may be withdrawn from the poor circuits; the aged preachers and the widows may sink in destitution and poverty; and the heathen may perish, for want of the gospel of the Son of God!

Can the Conference enter into negotiation with men who avow such principles? What preachers could meet them? Men who declare that at any time hereafter, when they shall have any favourite measure to accomplish, they believe it will be perfectly right to carry their designs by force! Can any dependance be placed in them, as to their future unity with the body, or love to the cause of God? I must confess that I see no possible ground for entering into negotiations with men who hold and act upon those principles. But were it even possible for the preachers to surmount the difficulty, and treat with the faction, many thousands of our *truly* "honest and upright" people would decline holding communion with them. There appears to me much to be *undone* by the members of the Association, before they can expect to enter into any kind of intercourse or treaty with the members of the Conference.

There is little probability of their publishing to the world a frank disclaimer of those principles; if they do, and afterwards wish the Conference to accede to some of their requests, are there not others of those proposed alterations which would be attended with permanent evil? They require that all our leaders' meetings and all our quarterly meetings shall be open for the discussion of all subjects connected with Methodism, and that the chairman shall be bound to put to the vote any motion which may be proposed by any person present. No matter whether the subject belongs to the conduct of preachers in Scotland or Cornwall, it is to be discussed in any meeting in the kingdom, and in the absence of all the parties concerned; that meeting is to pass its judgment, under the pretence of free discussion! Will that plan tend to promote peace, harmony, and love? Would not our meetings soon become arenas for debate and strife; and instead of the leaders returning home in due time to their families, with hearts burning with love and with renewed zeal for God, these assemblies would be protracted to a late hour, and frequently closed with discord, until the peaceable and quiet part of the leaders, would merely lay down their class-money and withdraw, or absent themselves altogether from them, except once in the quarter. If such a proposition had been laid before Mr. Wesley, I leave those who have read his writings to judge of what nature would have been his conduct!

Another of their demands is, that the preachers shall vote by ballot in the Conference. In the opinion of most wise and truly serious persons, the less of voting there is in the affairs of the church of God the better. It may be necessary (I do not say that it is the best way), to continue to appoint the President and Secretary by ballot; but certainly there is more Christian uprightness and honourable integrity in the Methodist Conference, than that any preacher should be afraid of, or ashamed to avow the vote he gives.

We find another grand part of their scheme is, that one hundred representatives or delegates shall be sent from one hundred of the principal towns; and they are to form a part of the Conference; and, to use their own term, the representative is to be the "people's man." They also state, that any person desiring to go in that capacity, is a proof that he is a proper person! Are all who desire to be members of parliament suitable persons for that station? Persons who think soberly, would question whether the man who is most eager for office is the most suitable! But, waiving that question, the plain fact is, that Mr. Wesley, foreseeing the danger and evil which would attend *lay delegation*, cautiously and firmly guarded against it. According to the Deed drawn up by Mr. Wesley, and enrolled in Chancery, the Conference can only be composed of regular travelling preachers; and to violate that Deed would be the dissolution of Methodism.

I write the more plainly on these subjects, because the leaders of the Association have been very assiduously telling the people that what they request is very little, being only a few very necessary improvements, and that Conference must grant their requests, and then all will be one again. NO! *never while Methodism continues, can the Conference grant what they ask.*

If the inquiry is, what will Conference concede, and how far will they meet the Association, I reply, at once, that it is not in my power to state what will be done by the Conference; but I can say what I think the Conference ought to do; and that is, firmly to maintain the present constitution of Methodism. The Methodist body is

a Christian society, united together for the purpose of saving their own souls, and endeavouring to be a blessing to the world at large. They are not a political body, and I hope never will be. Their rules need not to be multiplied; and whilst they preserve and maintain those which they already have, the bond of love will unite them together. While that bond remains, they are a part of the church of the God of love; destroy that union, and though for a short time they might continue an ecclesiastical body, they would gradually dissolve, and the memorial of them would perish. If the ensuing Conference—unterrified by threats, and undismayed by the *boasted* numbers who may for a time withdraw—calmly maintain that ground and that discipline which has for so many years had the sanction of the God of heaven, they will continue to prosper. Peace will again dwell within our societies, the smile and approbation of the Lord will be upon them, and they will be the honoured instruments of spreading scriptural holiness through a great part of the world.

A LOVER OF METHODISM.

FRAGMENTS. No. 1.

The Association have proved in the doctrines they have propagated, their total unfitness to guide the vessel (of Methodism) to its desired haven. They can gravely tell the world, that nearly a thousand ministers of Christ, though dependant on voluntary supplies, trample on the consciences and understandings of their brethren; they can cut off the supplies from the widows and orphan children of deceased ministers; they can dash the cup of sympathetic aid from the lips of the hoary-headed preacher, worn out in the service of the sanctuary, they can set members at variance with each other; and last, not least, they can train the young to speak evil of the rulers of God's people. Ought such an Association to exist, and to be composed of men who hold communion with the Wesleyan body? Most assuredly not. This truth is as clear as unclouded solar light, that the Association will obliterate Methodism; or Methodism must annihilate the Association. The question is not whether we shall have any *new* or any *old* Methodism; but whether we shall have any Methodism at all! To all intents and purposes it is to us, *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesie*. The Association has been generated by suspicion, reared by slander, and, in too many instances, will expire in apostasy.

On the whole structure of Wesleyan Methodism, the Almighty has stamped a most signal peculiarity. Its origin, progress, and work are peculiar. It stands equally remote from high Churchism, and low Dissent; it cannot hold any connexional alliance with ultra Toryism, or ultra Liberalism; statesmen and philosophers are alike puzzled with it; it never had an incorporated political character; and it never can have; until, by lay-delegation, a lay oligarchy and ministerial oligarchy shall have changed its original intrinsic character. It stands isolated before the world; the principle of exclusion which shuts out lay power from the Conference re-acts upon themselves; and prevents their collusion with, or their access to, the people. In Methodism we have a vast and mighty incorporation, unsustained and uncorrupted by political power. It can grapple with a difficulty that would overwhelm and crush any local or independent church, however respectable or influential. No local, factious majority can ride rough shod over a healthy, yet oppressed minority. The Conference, as a body, are dependent on public opinion, yet are independent of any individual or factious dictation. A broad and deep stream of libertinism is now pervading the land; and the Almighty appears to have raised Wesleyan Methodism as a breakwater in the confluence of the opposing interests and excitements of the land. The Connexion fears no democratic rage, and courts no aristocratic smile; the friend of all, the enemy of none. It can enforce obedience, without coercing its subsistence; its opinions and acts will, every year, increase in their consequence and influence. God has evidently designed Wesleyan Methodism to grapple with and surmount the evils of popular democracy. The foaming steed may bite the bridle, but the rider shall tame his mettlesome fury. In this painful, yet salutary work will the Connexion, at stated periods or intervals, be called to labour; but the final reward shall be quietness and assurance for ever.—C. WELCH.

A sensible and candid minister amongst a body of seceders in Scotland, was lately asked how it happened that his community were incessantly bearing testimony against the sins of other churches, whilst they seldom or never alluded to the sins of their own. He replied, "I acknowledge the fact, and I lament it. It arises from the unfortunate position which, as seceders, we occupy. To blame *others* seems necessary in order to

defend ourselves." Unfortunate position indeed! Were these "Fragments" intended for some other communities which must be nameless, I would charge them to take heed to the position which they occupy, and to look more to their own affairs, and less to the affairs of others; but they are written for the Wesleyan Methodists, who are not and never were seceders, in the sense above alluded to, from any portion of the church of God. Seceders, as Mr. Wesley states it, began by crying out against *others*—we began by crying out against *ourselves*. Such may find it necessary to condemn others in order to justify themselves. No such necessity is laid upon us. We can afford to live in peace and unity with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and by God's blessing we intend doing so. We covet not the produce of other men's gardens; our field is the world. But, if the wily thief, or the impudent open day robber is seen trespassing within our inclosures, he may find to his cost, that the same catholic principles which constrain us to peace, when it comports with purity, will constrain us also to visit such *liberal* conduct with summary and severe punishment.—J. M'LEAN.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are obliged to "J. W." for his information respecting the Warrington Association meeting; which, as far as it regards the prospects of the faction, was a complete failure. Our cold-blooded editor of the *Lantern* talks very composedly of *eight hundred* persons who attended, and of a *handsome collection*, but forgets to inform his readers that the amount of it was less than *twenty shillings*! The Wesleyan Missionary Anniversary, which was held there the day following, was nobly attended; and the collections exceeded those of the preceding Anniversary by upwards of £13!! But the *great Birmingham* meeting! We return the compliment, and say, "we thank *thee* Jew for teaching us that word." It was, indeed, a GREAT MEETING—for which we owe much to the spirited and sound members of our peaceful and prosperous societies in that large town. The infatuated Doctor Warren with his *clique* of erratic orators visited Birmingham to scatter firebrands, arrows, and death among our societies; they met, however, with a reception which we do not doubt made their "blood run cold!" and resolutions were passed, highly condemnatory of the wicked principles of the Association, and of the conduct of the Doctor, by overwhelming majorities! The conduct of the preachers who were present, and the right-hearted Methodists who were drawn thither by the invitation of these intruding agitators, has our hearty approbation and our most cordial thanks. The part which a certain Baptist minister performed in this affair, needs only to be known to be execrated! We may venture to predict that Birmingham and Warrington, with Leeds and Bolton, will not again be annoyed by such visitants.

We have received from a correspondent a brief notice of an eloquent sermon preached in a Wesleyan chapel, in Manchester, lately, by the Rev. R. W. Hamilton, from the words, "Let him that stole, steal no more." We sincerely hope it will be published, as nothing can be more seasonable during the nefarious proceedings of the Association. It is notorious, that the Leeds-street, Liverpool, branch of that *august* body, after having expelled the superintendent from the chair, proceeded to pass a resolution directing the steward of the society not to pay its just debts, but to retain the money in his own pocket, and to remove the account-book from the chapel vestry to the Pilot committee-room. All this was accordingly done. It is true, restitution was in part made, by the refunding of £18 8s. 4d., immediately after the appearance of our *first Illuminator*; the society-book, however, is still held back. Such tricks may be common among men who conceive themselves to be "singularly fitted for great actions;" yet, as they are always discreditable and occasionally hazardous, we hold it to be good advice, "Let him that stole, steal no more." The observations, also, which the Rev. gentleman made on the "integrity," "justice," and "liberality," required by the gospel, cannot fail to shed a salutary *light* on that novel system of religion and morals practised by the *dear* Doctor's friends in Liverpool. (1.) A company of spouters are travelling through the land, to demonstrate, *of course* beyond all possible doubt, that the Methodist preachers are a set of unprincipled men, who have forfeited the confidence of their societies and country! (2.) These *orators* continue punctually to attend the religious ministrations of these bad men, and are frequently so pharisaically devout as to attract general attention; and (3) they have unanimously agreed not to contribute *one farthing* towards the support of the preachers whom they constantly hear, but to take the benefit of their labours, and defraud them of their hire. So that, by their own shewing, this *new* kind of religion consists, first, in being led to Paradise by men whom they declare to be in the way of transgression; and, secondly, in outdoing their unprincipled guides in cunning and knavery, by cheating them out of their wages.

Communications have been received from "J. W."—"M."—"Sigma,"—"A Lover of Methodism," and "O." We have again to request the kind indulgence of several of our correspondents, as we are obliged to insert or delay from circumstances over which we have little control.

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION ;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES ; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY ; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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THE METHODIST NEW CONNEXION AND ITS LAY DELEGATION.

THE introduction of lay delegates into the Methodist Conference is, we are fully assured, incompatible with its legal establishment ; and, consequently, with the legal security of thousands of chapels to the connexion. If it were otherwise, it would, for reasons which we have already assigned in a series of papers, be imperative upon us to oppose the admixture of lay delegation with Wesleyan Methodism to the utmost of our ability. We have other objections to adduce against it, to which we respectfully beg the attention of our readers.

It would create such a passion for legislation in the body, as would inevitably make the laws and institutions of Methodism, changeable and uncertain.

There are persons who complain that the laws of the connexion are so many in their number, and so doubtful in their import, that they wish to see them simplified, and preserved from all uncertainty ; but if these complainers think that this desideratum awaits lay delegation in Conference, we hope they will pardon us for saying, they are under a delusion. By this change in the legislative power, the evils at which they murmur, would, we are convinced, be so far from diminution that they would increase an hundred fold. Novelties in every department of our executive administration would be extensively desired and expected. The present system of Methodism, which is so dear to myriads of pious and intelligent members, would have to be taken down, to be rebuilt according to a wavering earthly policy. Every Conference would be attended by new delegates, who, having some new schemes for the improvement of Methodism, would naturally wish to signalize their parliamentary career by procuring their legalization for the government of the connexion. What one Conference might think would be an excellent change, and, therefore, make law, another might think it destitute of excellence, and, therefore, repeal the law ; then substitute some new-fangled theory which, at a subsequent Conference, would most probably be thrown as chaff to the winds. Hence, our ancient and well-tried laws and institutions would be unsettled, and subverted by an endless repetition of new things.

We are happy to strengthen our objection to lay delegation on the ground which we now occupy, by presenting evidence, which even the Association will treat with great respect, from an article "on lay representation," which appeared in the *New Methodist Magazine*, for 1827. The concessions which are made by its sensible writer fully justify some of the preceding observations; and, moreover, show that the Conference of the New connexion appears to some of its own friends, as it has long appeared to us—to be degraded by its proverbial vacillancy of legislation. This is a serious evil to a small community like the New connexion; but to one of such magnitude as the Wesleyan, the evil would be fearfully augmented. Let the following candid statement be well considered:—"The *changeability* of the lay part of our annual Conferences, is an evil which deserves consideration, and the application of an adequate remedy. Generally speaking, the laws and institutions of a religious community should be fixed and permanent, and not variable and uncertain. But where a legislative assembly is continually undergoing changes as to the *men* who compose it, it is reasonable to suppose that its *measures* will partake of the same changeable character. The history of our connexion will, I presume, justify the supposition. I have no hesitation in saying, that if the preachers were as uncertain as the laymen in their attendance at Conference, continual vacillation in our laws and usages would be the inevitable consequence. And is this a state of things to be desired? Certainly not."

We are confident it is not "a state of things to be desired" in the Old connexion; and when we meet with persons who are zealous to introduce it into the body, our charity excuses them, saying, "they know not what they do." Though the preachers *are* more certain than the laity in their attendance at the New Methodist Conference, yet it has not saved the community from the evils which the author deprecates.—We are certain of what he "presumes," that the history of his connexion justifies his principle—that the frequent change of legislators leads to a frequent change of legislative measures, to the injury of the body, by producing in its laws and institutions variation and uncertainty. That he is as certain of the matter as ourselves, is evident from the "adequate remedy" which he proposes for the healthful working of the lay delegation plan. As it may be read at this crisis with both interest and profit, we trust to be readily excused for inserting it.

"The plan which I consider most eligible in effecting an improvement in our representation is this:—Let each circuit select two or three, or more, of the best qualified brethren for the office in question: let these be considered (and these only) the acknowledged candidates for the representation of the circuit. When this election is made, then I should propose that the persons so elected shall attend Conference on a plan of rotation, or agreeable to a mutual arrangement among themselves."

With all deference to this respectable writer, we more than doubt the adequacy of the remedy by which he hopes to heal the disease that is frankly admitted to exist in lay delegation. It might in some degree diminish the evil, and this would be very important; but it could not annihilate it, because there would still be a change of men in Conference, and out of this must grow a changeable legislation. But, if we were to admit this plan of reform to be "an adequate remedy," there are, in our judgment, insurmountable obstacles in the way of its application; and with us it is a maxim, "that an unapplied remedy is no remedy at all."

Who could persuade the electoral body to approve this "most eligible plan," and to act upon it? Would not the proposition, by many of the jealous electors, be scouted as the scheme of a junto to deprive them of their privileges? Suppose it were to be accepted in some circuits—new members might be added to their societies, and they would, of course, expect to take a part in the election of delegates to Conference; but if they were to be told that two or three individuals had been permanently settled in such office, would the information be satisfactory? We trow not. We believe the plan neither has, nor ever will be generally adopted.

It becomes, therefore, our duty to ask the disciples of the venerable Wesley, the following questions:—Is this remediless evil to be introduced into the legislative administration of Methodism? Are all our established laws and usages to be shaken and subverted, to make way for others which will be novel, variable, and precarious? Are we to have a new state of things in which we shall be "ever learning, and never able" to find any landing place in legislation? Is Methodism to be thus immolated at the shrine of an untamed democracy? To these queries different responses will be made; but we do not hesitate a moment to say, that the *noes* will far outnumber the *ayes*. If, then, the great majority of our people are for a peaceable, steady, prosperous government—to lay delegation they will "give no quarter."

Again. There is another objection which may be advanced against the admission of lay delegates into Conference.

It would be a serious inconvenience to the laity to be detained from their secular avocations during the time which is necessary to transact the business of Conference.

We may refer in proof of this position to the New connexion. The Conference of this body begins and closes its sittings in about a week; and, though it is considered to assemble at the most eligible period, yet to some lay members it is a loss of time which they can ill afford.—This fact is impressively published in some legislative acts which we shall lay before our readers, wishing them to keep in mind, that "the law is not made for a righteous man." It appears that some lay delegates have left Conference before its termination to join their families, and to attend to their proper concerns—a practice which the general rules of 1823 prohibit, as follows:—"Any delegate, who, without permission, withdraws from the Conference until its business be transacted, shall be subject to a vote of censure, and called to account at the next quarterly meeting of his circuit." This rigid regulation seems to have led to a far worse evil—the *profanation of the sabbath*. As the delegates could not leave Conference so soon as they desired, some of them left home so late that they spent the Lord's day on a stage coach, instead of devoting it to God, in the solemnities of the sanctuary. To suppress this defilement of God's holy day in "high places," the Conference of 1826 very commendably resolved, "That the lay representatives be expected not to travel on the sabbath day, on their way to Conference, and that they be required to be present at the opening of Conference."* If the question be put—what led the delegates to those irregularities which these enactments prohibit? The answer must be, that the Conference requires more time for the performance of its duties than the laity have at their disposal. Hence it is, that some circuits at sundry times omit to send any delegates

* It opens on a Whit-monday.

to Conference. We have examined, for instance, the minutes for 1830, and these show that about one-fifth of the circuits did not elect any of the laity to represent them in the Conference for that year. From the same cause arises another evil of which complaint is made, "the improper choice which circuits occasionally make of delegates." We ought to state that the writer above referred to, who utters this complaint, attributes it to another cause. "If the circuit expect no change of preachers, 'Oh,' say the wise men, 'we have no particular business, it does not particularly mean whom we send,' as though the whole business of a representative was to contend for a preacher." This candid author, who thus dishonours the system of lay delegation, by informing us how some of the circuits *despise it*, certainly knows more of the matter than ourselves; and, though we must concede to him, that "the improper choice is frequently made under these very mistaken notions; yet, we believe, the young, the inexperienced, the uninfluential are sometimes chosen, because the most proper men to attend Conference have the least opportunity. The question—who is best qualified to legislate for the connexion, has to give way to another—who can best leave his worldly concerns? The writer tacitly sanctions the correctness of our opinion in the exhortation with which he closes his article. "I would respectfully address myself to those among us, who, from their ability, respectability of character, and knowledge of our affairs, are well qualified to sustain an office so important. Let not *the sacrifice of a little time* be considered, when opportunity offers of your being useful to your fellow-men, and more especially to the church which Christ has purchased with his blood."

If it be thus inconvenient for lay delegates to attend a Conference which continues its sittings for a week only—what serious inconvenience would be felt if the laity were to attend the Wesleyan Conference? It seldom, under the present system, exceeds a fortnight; but, if lay delegation were admitted, the amount of debating and legislating would so greatly increase, that the utmost period allowed by law for the sittings of Conference would be entirely occupied. And could the laity attend Conferences of *twenty-one* days duration? The reply to this question in a certain quarter will be, that the Methodist connexion can readily furnish laymen, who are so free from the pressing engagements of business, as to have the requisite time at their command. Admitting this to be true—what then? Would these independent gentlemen be the elected delegates? Does the party that clamours for lay delegation as a remedy for all ills in the ecclesiastical body, and which is to exceed "Morison's pills" in removing all ailments from the natural constitution, wish it to be in such hands? No! Are not the *rich* members of our societies, like the preachers, the objects of their heartless attacks and abuse?—are they not said to be in league with the Conference to make Methodism "respectable?"—by which term we presume to be signified—worldly and useless? There cannot, therefore, be any desire to elevate this class of Methodists to the office of law givers. Once concede lay delegation in Conference, and there will be no peace unless the plan of election will bring the agitators into the legislative body, and subject it to their controul. To attain this object, the whole connexion would have to be *enfranchised*, and each society would have its harmony disturbed every year with electioneering tactics. The three cardinal doctrines of radicalism—annual parliaments, universal suffrage, and vote by ballot—must be established in the connexion; and there would be trained up,

within its inclosure, a generation of politicians prepared to unite with the hosts of popery and infidelity, to march against the noble institutions of the land, and overwhelm them with destruction! Would such a state of things be Wesleyan Methodism? Does the connexion desire to be under the dominion of this grovelling worldly polity? Most assuredly not. It *ought*—it *shall* be vigorously resisted. Methodism must be preserved a spiritual system to spread scriptural holiness both at home and abroad. Radicalize its government, and scores of thousands will disown it. But this democratic enterprize cannot be accomplished, and our adversaries know it. The repeated discomfiture which they have sustained in the courts of chancery, the abundance of loyal declarations which they have seen from numerous circuits, and the most satisfactory manner in which their cruel and shocking edict to “stop the supplies” has been rebuked by more abounding liberality—assure them, that all their efforts to transform our holy connexion into a radical political union, will prove abortive. The unhallowed fires which these incendiaries have kindled to consume Methodism, shall, by God’s blessing, purify her; and when they have given up the ghost and are corrupting in their tombs, “she shall look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.”

EPSILON.

ASSOCIATION SCENES DURING PASSION WEEK IN WARRINGTON!

“Some men singularly fitted for great actions, superior to discouragement, pass through difficulties which to others appear insurmountable, and no more regard opposition than does the stately bark the opposing billows of the ocean.” Thus oracularly spoke the Association, and, therefore, late on Saturday evening, or early on the morning of Sunday, April 12, 1835, large placards were exhibited in Warrington, giving the religious public and especially the Methodist part of it, to understand that during the ensuing week, a meeting of the far-famed Central Association, would be held in a certain temporary building called the Circus, where, a short time ago, certain four-footed animals were displaying their prowess, for the amusement of the inhabitants of the town. The worthy proprietor, however, reflecting on the conduct of certain strolling orators in places contiguous, which had been visited by them, and the awful principles by which they were actuated, determined that, no matter how “singularly fitted for great actions” they might be, in common with the elephant and other quadrupeds, the Circus should not be polluted by men “*under whose tongue is the poison of asps,*” and “*whose mouth is full of bitterness,*” he gave positive orders that the Circus should be taken down! This proceeding is, humourously enough, attributed to the influence of the Conference party!!—as is also a repulse which they met with from the host of the Lion hotel. “Pressing, however, through difficulties which to others appear to be insurmountable,” these zealous reformers at last succeeded in obtaining the consent of *one* or *two* of the trustees of the Independent or Quaker Methodist chapel (to hold the meeting there)—belonging to a sect, we are given to understand, peculiar to that neighbourhood.

The time selected by those erratic agitators for their work of discord and confusion, ought to be known in order to be deprecated. The evening chosen in which these factious intruders might appear in malignant attitude against a peaceable body of Christians, to injure the cause of Methodism and of God, was none other than Thursday in Passion week—a night in which a great portion of the church of Christ bring to more vivid remembrance the awfully momentous scenes of Gethsemane, and their results on the redemption of the world. To attempt to disturb the devout meditations of the Christian with disgraceful proceedings such as those which then transpired in Warrington, manifested a *recklessness* unparalleled in the annals of religious defection, and an *impiety*, indicative of a heart very far estranged from God—from righteousness and truth. Let it not be forgotten, also, that it was the evening immediately preceding

the anniversary of the Branch Wesleyan Missionary Society for the Warrington circuit! Were we not too well acquainted with the anti-missionary operations of this *clique* of intruders into Warrington, we might have concluded their message was peace; that their object in visiting this town was to allay the spirit of political strife, which had, unhappily, infected the inhabitants of every grade, by inculcating some hallowing and beneficial truth; that they were desirous of trimming and causing the Wesleyan lamp to shine forth with a sevenfold lustre; and that they were contemplating successfully to arouse the energies of the public in aid of the noble cause of Christian missions! But no!—one of the performers in this disgraceful scene, was Mr. Greenhalgh, who had actually published a pamphlet calling upon all the friends of missions to withhold their subscriptions! and this whole company have, both from the platform and the press, again and again, publicly declared their determination to follow the plan proposed by Greenhalgh, and now they earnestly exhort others to follow their example. With what took place in the private meeting, anterior to the public one, we have no desire to become acquainted; the results of the latter are before us, and we are convinced that every unprejudiced individual will easily discover the intention of this motley group of wandering orators in visiting Warrington. The bare-faced efforts which they have made to produce a schism in the peaceful society there; and their scandalous attempts to prejudice the minds of the public against the Wesleyan Missionary Society, were such, as brought upon them the just execration of all the well-disposed and peaceable inhabitants of that town; a glorious re-action took place, crowds rallied round the Missionary banner, the services connected with the anniversary were well supported by large and attentive congregations, and the collection was the greatest which that branch society has witnessed for many years!!

We were much amused with the *ruse* employed by these agitators to draw a congregation to listen to their vagaries. Three handbills were circulated as existing circumstances appeared to demand; in one of which we found the following announcement:—"The members of the Methodist Society in Warrington appear to be in the dark (!) with respect to the Association; they are earnestly though respectfully invited to attend and hear the truth stated." It was certainly very kind in these good-natured souls, to feel some degree of pity in behalf of the *benighted* members of the society in Warrington, a sympathy which our readers will doubtless imagine, was duly appreciated and suitably valued; we are warranted, however, in saying, that it was not. The Methodists there, are too well acquainted with "what's what," than to be drawn aside from the path of peace and unity by such a group of speculatists, as on this occasion exhibited themselves in that place; including the *valiant* chairman of the Liverpool Association, our worthy host of the White Lion, Dale-street, Liverpool; the celebrated anti-missionary hero, yclept Captain Barlow, of Bridgewater-street chapel notoriety; a gentleman who was very pompously introduced on the platform, as an editor of that *very celebrated and veracious* publication, ominously enough styled the *Lantern*, with a few others, whose names are too insignificant to be mentioned. The proportionate number of Methodists who attended, was as *one to six*, in a congregation confessedly of not more than *five hundred*; the veracious *Lantern* gravely informs us of a congregation of *eight hundred*; if the gentleman who was introduced as an editor that evening, were the writer of the article concerning the meeting at Warrington, which appeared pp. 203, 204, in that publication, we put the question to him, and ask—is the chapel capable of accommodating *four hundred* adult persons? We believe it is not! Five-sixths of the audience were composed of a strange and unnatural assemblage of the most hostile parties to religion, united in sentiment and effort to hate and destroy Wesleyan Methodism.

We will now to business. A person of the name of Rylands was called to the chair. Of this gentleman we know little more, than that he is very desirous of being an instrument in effecting the dissolution of the union between church and state, and no friend whatever to constitutional Wesleyanism; of which we should judge he knows but little, from the remarks with which he opened the business of the meeting; and, quickly arriving at the end of his chapter, he called upon an old acquaintance of ours, the publican in Dale-street, who very modestly informed the meeting the length of time he had been a member of the Methodist society; the offices which he had filled; that Methodism had cost him annually a sum of £50; and that he had nothing very particular to complain of! A very seasonable and proper question was proposed to him by the Rev. John Straw, whether or not he had, in "the case without a parallel," voted his superintendent out of the chair at the leaders' meeting. This question was plain, simple, and very easy of being understood, and also of response. However, this gentleman, "singularly fitted for great actions," as all who know him will acknowledge him to be, answered—"Who are you, sir? I have made many a better man than you tremble,

sir!!" We were forcibly reminded of the Leeds case, "*Farrer v. Scarth*;" and were really glad, after a little catechization from the superintendent of the Warrington circuit, to see our *spirited* host of the White Lion, resume his seat.

The next who was introduced to the meeting by Mr. Chairman was a person of the name of Grindrod, a chemist and druggist, of Manchester, whom the Association, for the sake of *eclat*, proclaim as *Doctor Grindrod*! We were much entertained with the commencement of his address, and if he had followed up the plan he proposed in his speech, we promised ourselves some further amusement; but, alas! after the first two or three sentences, there was a terrible *breaking down*. "I want you," said the learned orator, "to *come* to the true point for which we are *come* here to-night (a most desirable point to settle!) It is not to disturb your happy society—(what an admission!)—but to claim sympathy in behalf of your brethren!" Judge our surprise, gentle reader, when this son of consolation immediately began a furious attack upon the whole body of Methodist preachers as mercenary, monopolizing, and tyrannical men! This strange mode of manifesting sympathy, was indignantly animadverted upon by a gentleman present, when the meeting became so uproarious as to beggar all description; and we find it truly difficult to say, whether the conduct of the *honourable* chairman, the agitators, or the rabble present, was most reprehensible—the worthy *trio* appeared determined, if needs were, by *argumenta ad baculum*, to prevent the possibility of any reply to the unfounded attacks, which were made upon the characters of absent and innocent persons. Nay, so determined was the *impartial* chairman on this point, that he threatened to take the sense of the meeting, whether or not, he should call in the aid of the police, and eject, *vi et armis*, the preachers and their friends. The only "case" which may be considered "a parallel" with this, was, the proceedings of the anniversary meeting of the Carlow Bible Society in November, 1824, when the Protestant clergy were first grossly insulted and afterwards violently assaulted by the Roman Catholic part of the audience, and ultimately obliged to seek their personal safety in flight.

After a few insignificant observations from John Greenhalgh, of Manchester, the *liberal* chairman of the meeting, announced, in due form, the *valorous* president of the Liverpool Association! and

"In the instant came
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepar'd;
Which, as he breath'd defiance to my ears,
He swung about his head, and cut the winds,
Who, nothing hurt withal, hiss'd him in scorn."

This gentleman having obtained for himself a singular notoriety by his pugnacious proceedings at the disastrous meeting of the Association in the Music Hall at Leeds, we were desirous of giving him an impartial hearing, hoping, that since that period, he has become more acquainted with the *pacific* character of the gospel of our Redeemer, and has learned that "wars and fightings"* proceed from hearts unchanged by divine grace. If the account which this gentleman gave of himself and fraternity be correct, then we may encourage the hope that some change has been effected both as it respects the understanding and feeling. We must, however, confess, that we are no admirers of those who, on every occasion, are anxious to sound forth their own excellencies. It looks, to say the least of it, very suspicious! Hear him:—"That you may know what weight to attach to the statements of the men who now stand before you—you ought to be acquainted with them. We, then, are men (who doubts it?—and "singularly fitted for great actions," too!) of respectable character (bravo!) I mean so far as this world is concerned (!) nor in reference to respectability in the gospel sense, have the men who stand before you any need to quail to any (no, no!—this would be

* "There is another matter connected with your visit to Leeds, which I cannot forbear to mention; I mean the character of some of the persons with whom you were associated. I shall not offer an observation upon any of them, but that person from Liverpool, who so far forgot the spirit and precepts of the Saviour in whose cause he professed to be engaged, as to say to the venerated Mr. Scarth, whose character for consistency and integrity is not only unimpeached, but unimpeachable, "Sir, you are no gentleman, and here is my card." Now this is the plain unequivocal language of the duellist, and could have no other meaning but that of provoking a duel. Wonderful advocate this, of the cause of that Being who came not into the world to destroy men's lives, but to save them! Surely this illustrious reformer is not to be a specimen of the spirit and behaviour of the Methodist Societies, when they shall have been renovated by your measures of reform. You surely did not exhibit him as your pattern-card of the morality of that new and perfect form of Methodism which you wish us to receive. If you did, I hope you will not exhibit him again until the "Grand Central Association" shall have enacted, that no duel shall be fought but when the parties are *equal*; and that no person shall, in any place, whether in a Music Hall or elsewhere, challenge or shoot a gentleman, until he has first proved that *he is a gentleman himself!*"—*Letter to Dr. Warren, intitled, "A voice from Leeds," p. 7.* Notwithstanding, the *sweet-tempered* Editor of the *Lantern* asserts, that the story of a "duel" is fabricated by our "*pugnacious*" selves. "Oh, shame, where is thy blush!"

highly unbecoming a great action). We are IMMEASUREABLY the superiors of the Conference men! (of course, for "no honest or upright man can remain connected with them!") We have broken no law of Methodism—and none of Christianity." The orator, peaceful soul! certainly forgot the challenge!! Little as we may be supposed to know of the circumstances which led to the expulsion of these reformers from the Methodist society, we have gathered more than enough from their own "sayings and doings," to convince us, that the Wesleyan ministers of Manchester and Liverpool, would have been guilty of gross inattention to the interests of *pure religion and undefiled*, had they allowed these agitators to have remained in church fellowship with them.

A few hands were held up in favour of some resolutions which were proposed, viz.—thanks to the minister of the chapel (query, who is he?) to the trustees and the liberal and impartial chairman! and also to form a Branch Association. The results of this meeting on the Methodist society at Warrington, are highly favourable to Methodism as it is; and the spirit which these orators displayed, together with the objects which they contemplated, have led the followers of Wesley there, to rally round the old standard, with increased zeal and firmness, on which they have inscribed, in characters sufficiently large and distinct to be read by every beholder,

"Nolumus leges et religionem—mutari."

THE MANCHESTER DELEGATES, AND THE CONVICTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

The following account of some of the principal delegates, has been kindly furnished by the gentlemen themselves. Dr. Warren said, "he had been tried, cast, and condemned, and, according to the import of the word *suspended*, he had been hanged also." Mr. Sigston "stated farther, that Mr. Mallinson and himself were tried for contumacy and factious conduct—they were expelled from the society."—"Mr. Rowland then alluded to his own expulsion." Mr. Matthew Johnson said, the preacher, "had refused to him his society ticket, and so he was expelled."—Mr. John Gordon "gave a detailed account of his, and Mr. Slocomb's expulsion."—Mr. Wallace said, "he had himself been expelled from the body, after being nurtured in it for twenty years, and that the members of the Association were, *many of them*, in similar circumstances."

Tyrannical as the principles we advocate are said to be, we wish every man to be as free as his own thoughts. Let him be a Methodist or not, just as he thinks most conducive to his "soul's health." He should be at perfect liberty to renounce Methodism the moment it is felt to be a disadvantage. Only, we think, so long as he chooses to continue in society, he should cheerfully submit to its regulations, and "not mend our rules, but keep them for conscience' sake." If this be bondage, preachers and people should all be in bondage together. We should take this yoke upon us, not because John Wesley, or the Conference, have any "dominion over our faith," but because, by voluntarily submitting to these rules, we can advantageously unite in saving our own souls, and spreading true religion throughout the world. If any number of men think they can make better rules, and find out "a more excellent way," by all means let them do so; and if they find it out that the preachers and their friends are as bad as the Scribes and Pharisees, treat them accordingly, that is, as the Master says, "let them alone."

Agreeably to these views, had these delegates chosen to assemble, and to legislate for themselves, we should not have interfered with their Christian liberty; but they intend to take the new code of laws to Sheffield, and, if possible, force them upon the whole connexion, and this, we think, is quite another, and rather an amusing thing.

The influence of the Lord Chancellor's decision upon certain questions and parties in Methodism has already been pointed out in the *Illuminator*; and the meeting of delegates has a direct and powerful bearing in the case of a particular, and somewhat numerous class of persons, in New South Wales. The idea of similarity of circumstances, for instance, is irresistible: one of the parties having been "expelled" from religious, the other from civil society. It is true the delegates declare that their expulsion is "quite illegal," and such observations, we doubt not, are made in Sydney, as well as in Manchester, while the perfect legality of Dr. Warren's suspension has been affirmed by the highest authority.

There are, moreover, several hints and suggestions thrown out by this great meeting, which can scarcely fail to be understood in that distant part of the world. How emphatically, for instance, does it teach the necessity of caution! While "expelled" persons loudly proclaim their innocence, they should take particular care to say nothing about an "appeal," and make no motion for a new trial. The first is a vulgar and often a successful method of impressing the ignorant and unwary in favour of the guilty; but the latter may possibly prove a serious and expensive thing. Some time ago Dr. Warren raised the cry of "illegality," and nothing would satisfy him but an "appeal" to Cæsar. But, alas! Cæsar has proved himself to be as bad as the Conference; for, instead of removing the dear Doctor's suspension, he has saddled him with the costs of the law-suit, and thereby hung "a millstone" about his neck, and sent him "through the length and breadth of the land," to solicit the hand of charity to take it off. It will be strange, if all persons similarly circumstanced do not hence perceive, that although the cry of "innocence" may be kept up; yet that of "a new trial" might as well be dropped, as it would probably end in a renewed conviction, and an "affirmed" sentence.

Yet this caution is connected with no small share of encouragement, for if the proceedings of the "delegates" are founded in wisdom and truth, then it is possible for the "convicts," not merely to emerge from their present degradation, but to rise to respectability, nay to honour and distinction, and even to transmit their names to posterity as the benefactors of their kind.

If any person ask, how can this be?—we answer, by the very same means which the Association are now employing for the purpose of securing the objects they have in view. They can scarcely fail to take the hint about the "omnipotent" press; and how it may be employed for the purpose of ruining the character of the government which expelled them, by bringing all its laws and functionaries into utter contempt. A periodical filled with doleful accounts, from week to week, of their own "trials," and detailing, not the evidence, but the sentence—not their crimes, but their sufferings—would, perhaps, do something towards convincing the world that the administrators of law are cruel tyrants, and that it is the "worst species of persecution" to expel such people as themselves from the land in which they had been "nurtured twenty years." Having given to their new publication the old title, they will feel quite confident of final and complete success; for that which has so often stricken terror into their own hearts will seem, most likely, to frighten all the world beside, and having so often run away at the approach of the "*Watchman's Lantern*," they will naturally conclude that no man can stand before it.

Such a publication too would be an excellent mode of enlightening the mother country; for all who do not take part with the expelled citizens against the civil authorities, it is presumed, are yet "in the dark." It is true, there is a seeming incongruity in those persons undertaking to give good advice who have been sent to Botany-bay for neglecting it. But this difficulty may be got over. The Dudley "delegate" is at present the great instructor of the Methodist connexion, and has inundated the land with what he calls argument. Yet, it is certain, no convict ever paid less attention to good advice than a *gin-seller* does to "argument." A host of philosophers and philanthropists have demonstrated, ten thousand times over, that the indiscriminate retailers of ardent spirits "murder his majesty's subjects, and drive them to hell like sheep." But what do the "squires" in *gin-palaces* care for that? Having no need at all of any argument for their own conviction, they have the more to spare for other people; and on this principle, none so likely to give good advice, and set the nation right, as the people in New South Wales.

And why should not these convicts at once erect themselves into a parliament, as the delegates have "made themselves" into a Conference? It may, indeed, admit of a question, whether those who have so notoriously broken old laws are the most proper persons to make new ones. But then there never was a more flagrant outrage upon all Methodistic rule, than the so-called "Grand Central Association;" yet the projectors of this monstrosity are the very men who now come forward to give a new code of laws to the connexion. If any difficulty should arise from the consideration of an unauthorised few undertaking to give laws to many, let them remember, that, according to the *Lantern*, eighty-five delegates—many of them not even members of society—have felt themselves quite competent to give the plan of "lay delegation" to the thousands of our Israel; and the thing is already in such a state of forwardness, that it only awaits the formality of a Conference sanction, which, we are told, is sure to be given, as the preachers are to be frightened out of their wits by agitation. Why, then, may not a few ship loads of men in another hemisphere, at once, give a new constitution to the British empire? In a word, if men in desperate circumstances are to be relieved by a

coup de main, they must not be squeamish and bashful; for as there is but a step between the sublime and the ridiculous, so there is a close connexion between matchless impudence, and being "singularly fitted for great actions."

In framing the new code, of course, the Botany-bay legislators will keep in view the pole star of the "delegates." They never lost sight of themselves and their own particular "case." In Leeds, for instance, a few years ago, a majority of the leaders were accomplices in a daring violation of law; so that, either the law must be superseded, and Methodism changed, or the minority must try the majority. To meet this "critical case," the constitution had provided a special district meeting, armed with power, not to *set aside*, but to *execute* the discipline of the connexion. The consequence was, that this daring majority was obliged to submit to the law, just like a single and obscure individual. These parties having been reached once, are determined never to be reached again; so they propose that special district meetings be done away—the local meetings rendered independent—and that the decision of a majority be final, even when that majority happens to be combined for the avowed purpose of breaking the law! Again; a few leaders connected with Leeds-street chapel, Liverpool, have been expelled for lawless and destructive agitation; but a far greater number have excluded themselves, by assuming powers not their own, and voting the preacher out of the chair, and another man into his place. With all this fresh in their recollection, the delegates now naturally propose, that henceforth agitation and expelling preachers are to be no crimes. Agitators are to call all sorts of meetings, at all times, and discuss and decide all sorts of subjects, and the preacher may sit in the chair until he happen to displease his masters, and then be sent about his business! Surely, in such proceedings as these, the "expelled" people in New South Wales may behold the high road to respectability and honour. A meeting can easily be called in some central place. Should any gentleman recollect that he was once surrounded by a faithful band of accomplices, who vowed to defend him to the last, but that a foreigner, called a constable, sent by a distant bench of magistrates, came, notwithstanding, and arrested him, according to law, he could state his case most pathetically; and the assembly could then decree, that such tyranny is intolerable, and that henceforth, in all cases, the opinion of a majority of accomplices shall be decisive. Any gentlemen who happened to have been expelled for shop lifting or picking pockets, might also detail the cruel hardships experienced by themselves; when the indignant assembly would probably decree, in a voice of thunder, that the laws making such things offences be rescinded, and that they be considered crimes no more.

The effects of this legislative legerdemain would be splendid beyond conception. Every man, as if touched with the wand of a magician, would become a respectable character in a moment. For every man is respectable whose conduct is according to law; and if he find it inconvenient or difficult to change his conduct, so as to make it agree with the law, provided he changed the law, so as to make it agree with his conduct, who shall deny his respectability? By this means, too, an elevation would be attained far beyond that of mere respectability. Lycurgus, Justinian, Alfred, and others have attained immortal renown by legislating for mankind. And would it not be a fine thing, for a band of convicts to give laws to this great country? Or, for a handful of lawless and expelled demagogues to become the regenerators of Methodism? Well may the *Catechism* say, "some men are singularly fitted for great actions."

These reflections give rise to others, which it is not necessary to pursue. It might be asked, for instance, how far the British parliament and the British public would be likely to receive such a code of laws, coming from such a quarter? How they would work for the country, provided they were once to receive the stamp of authority? We might also ask how far the "delegates," who are at present so evidently above all law, would be likely to submit to the new enactments? What sort of a thing Methodism would be, if these wonderful recommendations were once to become law! What religion or common sense there would be, by restoring the malcontents to their former places—to re-unite the two parties, with their present views and feelings, and thus to revive a domestic quarrel which, having existed for years, to the disgrace of Methodism, has now ended—as in that case it would assuredly end again—in a separation! It might also be asked, how far the approaching Conference dare—yes, we say, "dare,"—make a bargain with Sigston, Warren, and Co., on the proposed terms of lay delegation? Sisison, of Hull, indeed, is for throwing the Poll Deed "overboard," as was done with a famous matrimonial engagement; but then, it happens to be in the custody of the Lord Chancellor. Our opponents have now shewn us the way to the Court of Chancery, and having been once, and fared well, we perhaps may be inclined, if necessary, to go again. Dr. Warren, however, has invented a notable scheme, by which he thinks to bring in lay delegation, and cheat the Lord Chancellor. But, although a

Doctor of the Canon and Civil Laws, it is clear, from recent events, that he knows but little of the laws of Methodism, and perhaps he is mistaken. It is matter of record, that Mr. Wesley wished "the hundred," as far as possible, to admit their brethren in the ministry to equal privileges with themselves, and that the distinction between them should be little more than a legal technicality. Nor will it be difficult to prove, at the proper time, that lay delegation and democracy are things to which he was, on principle, opposed. While the Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, in interpreting Deeds of Trust (and they are under his special protection), shall continue to respect the known intention of the parties who created them, so long will the fields of Methodism continue to waive in golden glory, in spite of the floods of the Association; for "though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over."

Correspondence.

THE REV. JABEZ BUNTING, D.D. AND THE PUBLIC PRESS.

Sir—A slanderous individual styling himself, "A Wesleyan Methodist," has forwarded a communication to the editor of one of the lowest of the public prints of this town, evidently intended to injure the moral and religious character of the Rev. J. Bunting, D.D. The Rev. gentleman dwells, however, in a purer atmosphere than to be affected by the putrid exhalations of slander and obloquy which this shameless, and degraded "Methodist" delights to pour forth. Dr. Bunting ranks too high in the church and the world to be injured by any scurrilous invective, which an anonymous scribbler may invent, or the *Liverpool Mercury* circulate; his public and private character stands unsullied—his conduct has invariably been marked by unflinching integrity and good faith—his talents, mighty as all will acknowledge them to be, have been, and still are, sacredly dedicated to the cause of God and of truth in the Wesleyan connexion, and in the affection and esteem of his brethren in the ministry, and of hundreds of thousands in the Methodist society does he continue to live. This is cause of legitimate glory and boast! But this "Methodist" (!) in direct violation of a positive and well-known rule of the society, gives utterance to a direct untruth, by declaring that "Dr. Jabez Bunting has written to the *Times* to say, that the Conference does not wish the members of the Methodist societies to vote for Lord John Russell." I call upon this unprincipled "Methodist" for proof! An equally absurd and malignant statement, bearing the signature W. S., appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* of May 1, 1835; and certainly a greater number of falsehoods were never seen in so small a compass. The following laconic and spirited reply, is all that such contemptible slanders deserve:—"Dr. Bunting is not the 'J. B.' mentioned in the *Times*. He did not write the letter which appeared in that journal respecting the Methodists of South Devon and Lord J. Russell. Dr. Bunting is not in any sense the 'Editor of the *Watchman*,' neither is he the 'superintendent of the *Arminian*' or any other magazine: he is merely one of the three secretaries belonging to the Wesleyan Missionary society, to which office he was unanimously appointed by the Conference, in opposition to his personal wishes and feelings. He neither did nor could elect himself to that, or to any other office which he has ever held in the Methodist connexion. He is not 'a Tory' in politics; but a *Whig* as *Whigs* were in 1688. In religion he is not a 'master-piece of bigotry,' in proof of which I may just state that he differed from the great majority of his brethren on the question of Catholic Emancipation; nor have 80,000, nor 20,000, nor even 5000" souls "seceded from the Methodists; and he no more caused the secession of the few who have departed from the Wesleyan connexion than—(the man in the moon!) I deny that Dr. Warren has been persecuted either by Dr. Bunting or any one else, and if he has suffered he has himself alone to blame." J. M.

Liverpool, May 7, 1835.

DR. WARREN AND THE ASSOCIATION UNMASKED!!

Sir—The following extracts from the *Advocate* of the 27th ult., which contains a full report of the proceedings of the meeting of "delegates," recently held in this town, show how little Dr. Warren and his partizans really care about the Theological Institution, the establishment and continuance of which, as a most monstrous evil, they pretended, gave them so much pious concern; and that, from the beginning, these desperate men have been aiming at the total subversion of Wesleyan Methodism; Dr. Warren himself de-

claring, that though in accomplishing his wishes as to *lay representation*, he should "abolish Methodism, or reduce it to a state of ruin," he was determined to persevere in the attempt. But let him speak for himself. Thus he is reported by his friend John Stephens, in the *Advocate*, to have delivered himself:

"The people stood in need of something which they had not at present; and he would now speak to them the deep thoughts of his mind as to what he considered to be most particularly necessary. He could find nothing short of a *full, fair, honest representation* of the people. He admitted that the subject was encumbered with many difficulties; and it was *not easy to say how he could accomplish what he wished, WITHOUT ABOLISHING METHODISM, OR REDUCING IT TO A STATE OF RUIN*. He saw also that there were some *legal* difficulties in the way," &c.

"The meeting would go for nothing, for less than nothing, if *that principle* (lay representation) were lost sight of for a moment. He had taken up that ground, and no man should remove him from it. *That was the ground he had chosen, and there he would abide*," &c.

"Dr. Warren moved 'that the representation of the people be in the Conference, two representatives to be chosen annually from each district meeting.'"

"He should not rest till he had succeeded in introducing lay delegates into the Conference."

The report, from which the above extracts are made, occupies twenty-one columns and a half of the *Advocate*, containing 3429 lines; of which, *not sixty lines refer to the Theological Institution*. All comment is superfluous. With the Association, the Institution is nothing, and representation every thing. While DR. WARREN ON HIS PART HAS PLEDGED HIMSELF TO ATTEMPT THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF HIS WISHES THOUGH, IN DOING SO, HE SHOULD ABOLISH AND RUIN METHODISM.

Manchester, May 4, 1835.

O. R.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—I was not, I confess, much surprised after what we have seen of the "crooked policy and double dealing" of the agitators, to behold in last week's *Lantern*, a paper professing to give an account of the "Annual Meeting of the Committee, Subscribers, and Friends of Wesleyan Sunday Schools in the Manchester Third Circuit;" but which is entirely an *ex parte* statement. In fact, the paper itself is so utterly destitute both of good feeling and truth, that I should have passed by it without notice, and consigned it to the oblivion it so richly deserves had it not been for the information of those who were not present at the meeting. Mr. Greenhalgh, the author of the "account," after stating the circumstances which followed upon Allen's interruption, with a minuteness bordering on exaggeration, either forgets or entirely suppresses the fact that Mr. Anderson did, at Mr. Allen's request, again read over the list of conductors. The manner in which Mr. Hughes obtruded himself before the notice of the meeting, even after he was repeatedly warned by Mr. Anderson, that the meeting had no power of interfering, shows the spirit which actuates his party. With respect to only 18 out of 200 voting for the original motion, this we can say: in many parts of the room, the notice which was given immediately preceding it, was entirely inaudible, owing to the clamour of the opposing party. Lastly, Mr. Greenhalgh states, that Mr. Mayor declared, that three out of six of the sub-committee, which was appointed by the general committee, were favourable to Mr. Hughes's continuance in office; but, at the same time, he neglects to state that Mr. Mayor asserted that those three "gave in" unto the rest, "for the sake of expediency" (to use his own words); and as for Mr. Anderson's not putting the matter to the vote, Mr. A. never refused to do so; but I would inquire, what necessity existed for the doing so, after each had declared his sentiments on the subject.

In conclusion, let us advise Mr. Greenhalgh, next time he turns reporter, to give a more faithful and accurate report than that which has been the subject of our consideration at present. I must crave the indulgence of your readers for what to many must appear uninteresting and, perhaps, unnecessary; but when the subject itself is considered as tending to show in a stronger light, the mean principles of our antagonists, I hope it will not be considered superfluous.—I remain, yours &c.

PHILAETHES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—Persons who have attended the public meetings of the Association must have been particularly struck with the pompous pretensions which are put forth to extraordinary attainments in religion. If the old divines, or if their Lord and Master, are to be regarded, these stout and offensive boasts of pre-eminent sanctity are evidences of

hypocrisy. Some of the platform speech-makers have said, that "in Liverpool the members of the Association are, in point of respectability equal to the Conference men; and they are, in regard to piety, immeasurably their superiors;" and lest this modest statement should prove too large to be swallowed and digested by an incredulous audience, it is confirmed by the authority of a celebrated revivalist, who is reported to have said to the everlasting disgrace of the two superintendents of the Liverpool circuits, "you have expelled all the praying people." Surely, Sir, I ought to tremble for the Methodist societies in your populous and respectable town! They are held up to the world as *prayerless* souls!—and, if prayerless, they must be "without Christ," and in "the broad way which leadeth to destruction!!" O, what Christian charity is manifested toward these societies by a number of itinerant gabblers!

Sir—While it is deeply humbling to see men who have yet to "put away all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, with all malice," saying, "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are we;" it is somewhat consoling to know that, in this particular, no "strange thing" hath happened unto the church. "High towers must look for lightnings. We offer not to undermine, but those walls which we cannot scale." The most distinguished personages among the Israelites are witnesses to the truth of these declarations. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram seduced "two hundred and fifty princes, men of renown," and drew, through their instrumentality, all the congregation of Israel from their allegiance to God and his servants. They rose up and charged Moses and Aaron with the assumption of an arbitrary and tyrannical power, saying, "ye take too much upon you;" but Moses retorted the charge upon the leaders of the faction, and the sequel of the contest demonstrated the equity of the retort in the most awful and convincing manner.—This case, Sir, is instructive as it shows what a curse a few restless, factious spirits may be to a people; and also with what rapidity an unprincipled disaffection and opposition to the ministers of Christ may be diffused among a vast multitude of persons. There is, Sir, one striking feature in the case which ought not to be overlooked—this ancient association of reformers, like the modern one, *made a flaming profession of eminent piety*. I hope, Sir, you will permit the sacred historian to be heard: "They gathered themselves together against Moses, and against Aaron, and said unto them, ye take too much upon you, seeing *all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them*: wherefore, then, lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?"—Num. xvi, 3. There is a passage on this point in Bishop Hall's contemplation of Korah's conspiracy, so appropriate to present times that I trust to be excused for transcribing it. It reads as follows:—"Nothing can be more pleasing to the vulgar sort, than to hear their governors taxed, and themselves flattered. 'All the congregation is holy, every one of them: wherefore lift ye up yourselves?' Every word is a falsehood. For Moses dejected himself; 'who am I?' God lifted him up over Israel; and so was Israel holy, as Moses was ambitious. What holiness was there in so much infidelity, fear, idolatry, mutiny, and disobedience? What could make them unclean, if this were holiness? They had scarce wiped their mouths, or washed their hands, since their last obstinacy; and yet these pick-thanks say, 'All Israel is holy.'"

Trusting, Mr. Editor, that these remarks will not be useless—I am, dear Sir,
yours affectionately,

AN ENEMY TO HYPOCRISY.

DR. WARREN AND THE CONFERENCE JOURNALS.

The following documents comprise an extract from a speech delivered by Dr. Warren, at Bury, on the 10th ult., and taken down at the time by a gentleman not a member of the Wesleyan society, nor in any way involved in the existing disputes. Dr. Warren having denied the correctness of the report, it may be proper to add that its fidelity is confirmed by the evidence of other individuals. Two of the letters now published have already appeared in print; the third was suppressed.

"When at London, being desirous to investigate the volume containing the account of the journals &c., of the preachers, and permission being granted, I and my lawyer went—Mr. Percy Bunting and his lawyer being present during the whole period. And what, my good people, do you think was my astonishment on examining this large folio volume and not being able to find one single line of the Plan of Pacification, excepting the protest of Thomas Taylor? I was amazed and perfectly astonished. Mr. Bunting himself was the same. I could scarcely believe my own senses—such was my astonishment—for I am convinced that a darker deed was never done in the darkest ages of Popery. These, your Conference men, base in principle as in act, must have taken three, four, or more leaves from out this large

volume, and thus the Plan of Pacification is for ever destroyed. It is by acts like these, they, the Conference men, justify their measures, and win their trials, and justify their tyrannical assumptions of power. But I will leave the dark deed—this unrighteous act—to the day of resurrection."

MR. T. P. BUNTING to DR. WARREN.
King-street, Manchester, April 18, 1835.

Sir—I have been greatly astonished to be informed that, at a meeting held in Bury on the 10th instant, you asserted that, on examination of the Journals of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, some weeks ago, in my presence, you found that the "*Conference men, base in principle as in act, must have taken three, four, or more leaves from out that large volume.*"

If the information had not been conveyed to me upon the testimony of a very respectable and unprejudiced individual, who professes to have taken down the words at the time, and who has shown me his manuscript—and were it not confirmed by other equally credible evidence—I should certainly hesitate as to the propriety of troubling you upon the subject. But I am sure you will agree with me, that, when it is stated upon authority such as I have mentioned, that a charge directly and seriously affecting private character has been preferred by you, it is only just to give you the opportunity, either of distinctly denying that you made the assertion referred to, or of again openly repeating it. If your expressions have been misrepresented, you cannot think that the continued circulation of so foul a falsehood can contribute to the success of any good cause; and I put it to you whether, as a gentleman and an honest man, you can refuse to afford to the parties implicated in the accusation, the amplest and speediest means of contradicting it, which lie in your power.

If, however, contrary to every reasonable and charitable conjecture, any motive shall induce you to evade a plain, positive, and immediate answer to this letter, it is not my intention again to address you in this way.—I am, Sir,

Your very obedt. servt.

T. PERCIVAL BUNTING.

The Rev. Dr. Warren.

DR. WARREN to MR. T. P. BUNTING.
Oldham-st. Manchester, April 18, 1835.

Sir—I have long ago ceased to be astonished at any thing which my opponents may affirm, in the most solemn manner to be *truth*, though incontestibly *false*. The information which you say has been given you, and at which you are greatly astonished, is a most atrocious falsehood!—namely, that I said at the Bury public meeting, in reference to the non-appearance of the documents which I expected to find in the Journals of the Wesleyan Conference, that the "*Conference men, base in principle as in act, must have taken three, four, or more leaves out of that large volume.*" No such words ever passed my lips! On the contrary, when I have been asked whether I had reason to suspect that any leaves had

been taken out, I have uniformly affirmed my most deliberate opinion, that *no such act has ever been done*, and that the documents in question were never entered!

Yet you say that your informant is "a very respectable and unprejudiced individual who professes to have taken down the words at the time, and shown you the manuscript;"—that, "were it not confirmed by other equally credible evidences, you would certainly hesitate as to the propriety of troubling me upon the subject."

Now, Sir, I have only to express my fears, that some villain, long practised in the art of falsehood and perjury, has practised upon your unsuspecting and inexperienced youth; or that you have been hoaxed by some one who wishes to render you contemptible in the eyes of your friends.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.

SAMUEL WARREN.

Mr. T. P. Bunting.

We, whose names are subscribed, were present during the whole of the public meeting at Bury, and solemnly declare that no such words were uttered by Dr. Warren as those which have been falsely attributed to him by some person or persons, and reported to Mr. T. P. Bunting.

THOS. TAYLOR.

JOHN GREENHALGH.

JAMES LIVESLEY.

SAMUEL LORD.

MR. T. P. BUNTING to DR. WARREN.

King-st. Manchester, April 21, 1835.

Sir—The object of my former communication, as to your reported observations at the Bury meeting having been fully answered by your positive denial that you made them—I need not enter into any vindication of the unquestionable veracity of my informants. Your assertion that you do not believe that any leaves were ever taken out of the Conference Journal sufficiently establishes that fact—and it would be useless to moot the question whether or not you have always said so.

An acute, but, perhaps, somewhat fanciful friend, has suggested that the last paragraph of your reply contains a sarcasm, however dull and indistinct, upon my "inexperienced youth." If such were your intention, I can only assure you, in all simplicity, that I remember instances in which I have been so far suspecting and experienced, as to detect in individuals of respectable reputation, and of greater pretensions,—those characteristics, which others were much slower in discerning, but which all honest men now cordially unite in detecting.—I am, Sir, your very obedt. servt.,

T. PERCIVAL BUNTING.

The Rev. Dr. Warren.

FRAGMENTS. No. 2.

In the evening, I had a meeting with the preachers, stewards, and several principal friends, together with almost all the leaders (male and female), and endeavoured to set them right on many matters on which they had got very uneasy. It was a very solemn and affecting time; and, I believe, all were determined to leave minor matters, and strive together for the hope of the gospel, laying themselves out, for the future, to be more useful to society at large, and to labour more abundantly to bring sinners to God. On one proposing the question to me—"Is Methodism now what it has been?" I answered—"NO!" It is more rational, more stable, more consistent, more holy, more useful to the community, and a greater blessing to the world at large." And all this I found no difficulty in proving.—DR. ADAM CLARKE.

I have lived more than three score years and ten; I have travelled a good deal, both by sea and land; I have conversed with and seen many people, in and from different countries; I have studied the principal religious systems in the world; I have read much, thought much, and reasoned much; and the result is—I am persuaded of the simple unadulterated truth of no book but the Bible; and of the true excellence of no

system of religion but that contained in the Holy Scriptures—and, especially, Christianity, which is referred to in the Old Testament, and fully revealed in the New. And while I think well of and wish well to all religious sects and parties—and especially, to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity—yet, from a long and thorough knowledge of the subject, I am led most conscientiously to conclude, that Christianity itself as existing among those called Wesleyan Methodists, is the purest, the safest—that which is most to God's glory and benefit of mankind; and that, both as to the creed there professed, form of discipline there established, and the consequent moral practice there vindicated. And I believe that among them is to be found the best form and body of divinity that has ever existed in the church of Christ, from the promulgation of Christianity to the present day. To him who would say, "Doctor Clarke, are you not a bigot?" without hesitation I would answer—"No, I am not: for by the grace of God, I am a Methodist!" Amen.—*IBID.*

The sign-board, or, as it may be called, the bill of fare which certain men of business exhibit on their shops or warehouses, to attract attention, determines in a great degree what shall be the character of their customers. It does not, in the first instance, at least, exert any influence in the *formation* of their character; but in *selection* it works wonders; and there is as attractive and talismanic an affinity between certain sign-boards and certain characters, as there is between the wonder-working magnet and the steel-filings—which, as every body knows, will find out and embrace each other in any crowd, however great, and under any disguise, however deep. Tradesmen! look well to your sign-boards. Authors! look well to your prospectuses and title-pages; you have the selection of your customers and readers in your own power. And O ye Methodists! take care how you attempt to alter the Wesleyan bill of fare. If you change this, you must prepare for such a change of customers as, perhaps, you are little aware of. Only *do* as some reformers wish, and emblazon on the old Wesleyan sign-board, in flowing characters, "Hostility to the Church of England maintained here,"—"Unrestrained license of discussion allowed here,"—"An echo to the spirit of the age kept up here,"—"A perfect equality of political rights dealt out here,"—"Mutual suspicion, &c. &c. tolerated here,"—"Subjection to rule or authority dispensed with here;"—and what will be the consequence? Why, you will get a *certain* increase of 14,383 members before Conference, besides retaining all the Association men—not excepting the president of that "Grand" community, who, in his zeal to promote Methodist reform, challenged Mr. Scarrh, of Leeds, to *fight a duel!* But what gain would this be to the cause of Christ? It would be such a gain as the northern barbarians were to the Roman empire, or the greedy locusts to the green herbs of Egypt. It would gain strife, and debate, and schism to us. It would gain a set of men who would engage us in discussions about "mint and anise and cummin," whilst the weightier matters of the law were neglected. The rights of man, although not better understood nor taken care of, would be more talked of; but the rights of Christ would be neglected and trampled upon. Look at some other communities which offer *accommodation* in these matters, as a staple article in their trade, and let the Methodists learn how much better it is to retain the original motto upon Mr. Wesley's sign-board—"We have nothing to do but to save souls."—REV. J. M'LEAN.

Wesleyan Methodism does not covet the communion of persons who take more pleasure in contending for a licentious liberty than in promoting the work of faith and the labour of love. It has dealt exclusively in soul-work from the beginning; and, blessed be God, there are thousands among us who would suffer martyrdom rather than allow it to be diverted from this, its holy, its legitimate employment.—Some may think that the Methodists should, in these liberal times, relax somewhat of the rigidity of their discipline; but the Methodists themselves think that there never was a time when they were so loudly called to maintain and enforce it, both on preachers and people. In former days, there were few temptations for worldly, ambitious, strife-loving men to join us: poverty and persecution were our safeguards and our barriers. But the state of things is altered now: our number, our wealth, our political influence, are strong temptations for worldly men to come amongst us; and the scriptural liberality of our terms of communion, lay us more open to their annoyance than other sects of a less catholic character. If a strict, a godly discipline be surrendered, the flood-gates will be thrown open. In that case, the sooner Methodism be swept away the better; for it will have proved itself an unfit instrument for the holy God to employ in evangelizing the world. But I have no fear of that, whilst the present generation of preachers and people exist. The recent agitations, however painful in some respects, have done immense good to the cause of Wesleyan orthodoxy. The attachment of our beloved people to a system which God hath so highly honoured, has not only been proved, but, in thousands of

instances it has been greatly increased. A race of Wesleyan giants have been cradled in this storm, who will be the champions of another day. "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things; and blessed be his glorious Name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen."—*IBID.*

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Patience! patience! Mr. Editor of the *Lantern*! The delirious effusions of our contemporary have excited our *deepest* sympathy. Poor gentleman! the failures of the Association at Warrington, Birmingham, and other places—together with the results of the *great (!)* delegate meeting at Manchester, have most seriously affected his nervous system, and we *tremble* for his personal safety! What lucid intervals he may occasionally have, we cannot tell; but, from the feeble glimmer of his *Lantern*, we opine not many. The last interview we had with him exceedingly shocked us; and, pondering upon his ravings, we involuntarily exclaimed—"we would not have such a heart in our bosom, for the dignity of the whole body!" and justified the assertion of a favourite bard,

"Infected minds,
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets."

In that paroxysm of high feverish excitement, he talked wildly of "scouring the country," "formidable men in black," "battle," "firing broadsides!" "cudgelled brains," "handcuffs," "public officers," "prisons," &c. It is, however, a source of relief to us, that *Doctor* Grindrod belongs to the Association, and to his care we commit the *poor* Editor, hoping, that by the administration of an Association *relative* pill, he may, at our next interview, be more composed, and enabled to attend to his *important* and *responsible* duty, of a *guide* in the *dark*! It is truly pitiable to see *such argumentative* talent, prostrate in the dust!

Our corresponding friends are curious to know certain particulars respecting the "doings of the faction," a few of those we will briefly *illuminate*. "X." inquires whether the abstracted society book of the Leeds-street chapel has been returned. We believe not. The money (£18 8s 4d) was restored as soon as the transaction was *illuminated*; and, we suppose, a little further *illumination* may be necessary to effect the restoration of that document. At the proper time, more of our *light* shall be thrown upon this nefarious business, if we are not spared the trouble by a speedy restitution. "J. R." asks, "How is Dr. Warren to raise the £2500 he has so foolishly squandered in going to law with his brethren? This question is more easy to propose than to furnish a reply. Perhaps the Liverpool financial secretary to the "Grand Central," who so *rudely* forced his way into the Lovefeast, at Wesley chapel, Liverpool, last Sabbath day, and who has obtained a *contemptible* notoriety by the zeal with which he has distributed *forged* Methodist tickets can tell. But the question, whether "travelling expenses to London," be not included in a certain learned cotton spinner's subscription of £100, must remain unanswered by us at present. Probably, when the remaining £2400 shall have been raised "through the length and breadth of the land," we may dispel some of the darkness in which this, and other similar items, are now involved.

"A Seat-holder of Leeds street Chapel," informs us of the *sneaking* insult offered to the Rev. S. Jackson, on Sunday forenoon, the 26th ultimo, by two of the Association travelling orators—men "singularly fitted for great actions." It was a *pitiful* revenge to take, because they were thwarted in their attempts to *seduce* the leading singers away to the Music Hall, to *spit* their spite upon the officiating minister, who did nothing to influence, however he might gratefully approve, the conduct of those honest and faithful sons of Asaph. We hope those gentlemen (!) and the congregations generally, both at the Music Hall, Liverpool, and the Tabernacle, Manchester, would meditate upon the 1st Lesson for that morning's service, viz.—Num. xvi. In the opinion of multitudes, it was a singularly appropriate chapter to open those rooms with. We have not heard whether they *dared* to read it there or not; we confess, we have our doubts. This reminds us of the dissentient local preachers at Leeds, in 1827, who endeavoured to destroy that Society by *throwing up* their plans, &c. on the very Sunday when the appointed 1st Lesson was Ezekiel, c. ii. We fear the Association will pay very little attention to these almost unexampled coincidences; or, to our recommendation, to ponder seriously upon them; but sound Methodists, who not only *venerate* their Bibles, but *read* them, will *think* for themselves, under the guidance of that good Spirit who indicted them "for our learning."

To our Manchester correspondent, "Omega," we tender our cordial thanks. We regret that the greater part of our present number was in type, when his favour arrived. We intend it to appear in our next, together with the communication from "An Admirer of the Case without a Parallel." We also assure "Omega," that we have by *no means* done with the Manchester delegates, either individually or collectively. We hope soon to hear again from him.

Communications have also been received from "W. P. B."—"An Enemy to Hypocrisy,"—"J. M."—"Sigma,"—"Philaethes,"—"O. R."—"A Lover of Methodism,"—"Epsilon,"—"Mentor,"—"Alpha," and "M."

Other Notices to Correspondents are unavoidably deferred.

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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THE SCRIPTURAL APPOINTMENT OF THE MINISTRY DEFENDED,
AGAINST THE PRIMARY PRINCIPLE ADOPTED BY THE MAN-
CHESTER DELEGATES.

WHATEVER opinion we may entertain respecting the spirit and proceedings of the meeting of delegates at Manchester, we cannot but rejoice that it has been held. It has fully opened up to public view, that which we always knew to be the *real* case in dispute between the Association and the Wesleyan connexion. We have repeatedly charged an intention of revolution upon them, and they have as often denied any design beyond the redress of grievances—the restoration of lost rights—and the impartial administration of the existing provisions of the Methodist constitution. It has turned out, that they have lost no rights—that they have no grievances—except such as are connected with their own misconduct; and, finding as they proceeded, that they have *no case*, they have resolved now, that *Methodism itself*, of which they avowed themselves the pure, well-principled, and faithful adherents, is the *grievance* against which they have to complain.

In accordance with this, they first agree to an abstract principle, and resolve that the institutions and government of the connexion shall square to that principle. Abstractions and theories are the delight and glory of all reformers. Their brain teems with ideal pictures of constitutions, laws, churches, governments—cut and dried—fitted to all climes, places, and people, just as a tailor fits his coat to the back of the gentleman he intends to adorn, or screen from wind and weather. These constitutions for the church have all one origin, the *vox populi*; which, we presume, in this case, at least, is taken as the *vox Dei*—for we hear of His voice in no other way. There might be no divine government—no revelation from God—no acknowledged Head of the church—no spiritual kingdom in existence—no laws and rules propounded for the faith and obedience of Christians, by the oracular manner in which the leading principle of the Association is set forth. The first edition of this principle is stated as follows:—"That the basis of a plan for the reformation of Methodism, to be adopted by this meeting, shall be the principle of the right of popular *interference of the members of the church in all the operations of the*

system." Some of the members of the meeting, startling a little at the terms of this resolution, it was amended, as follows, and adopted, nearly unanimously—only nine lifting up their hands against it: "That the basis of the plan for a reformation of Methodism, to be adopted by this meeting, shall be the principle of the right of interference of the members of the church in the regulation of all its affairs." We know not why the meeting should have been at the trouble of altering the first form of the resolution. The second is exactly the same in principle; and all which was done by the change, was to get rid of the term "*popular*," and substitute for the words, "*the operations of the system*," those of "*the regulation of all its affairs*."

These terms are, in themselves, extremely vague; but we will take the resolution to mean what we believe to be the sense intended to be conveyed by those who passed it, viz.: the absolute, inalienable, and universal right of all the private members of the Wesleyan Methodist community to "*interfere*" in the management, direction, and government of the whole and entire system; that nothing shall be done, in any way, in Methodism without the consent, concurrence, and determination of all the members of the church, taken and had by some means. In other words, that they shall be parties in every part of the operations of the great machine, and that nothing can be lawfully done, except they are included. We infer this latter particular, because the powers in question are called "*rights*."

Now, if these great and inalienable "*rights*" belong to all "*the members of the church*," then we ask, how they were obtained? As the question relates altogether to the Christian church, it must be examined by the New Testament. It will not do for our politico-religious legislators to refer to their notions of law—of the principles of abstract justice—to one of the Abbé de Sayes metaphysical constitutions—to Jeremy Bentham, or the Utilitarians. The question is, whether, when it pleases God to convert a sinner from the error of his ways, and he unites himself to the visible church, he obtains the right to "*interfere in the regulation of all its affairs*," by the terms of his admission. We have long been accustomed to read our Bibles; but we do not recollect, that, with the privilege of admission into the church, granted to every disciple, this right is super-added. When the Association will favour us with scriptural proof of such right being *inherent* in all the members of the church, we promise to bestow further attention on the subject. By the bye, how variously the wind blows in the quarters of these gentlemen! It is only a few weeks since Mr. Gordon, the mover of this notable resolution, denied, in the Music Hall at Liverpool, that the ministry had any inherent rights, and called it "*inherent nonsense*." Now, however, the same gentleman maintains that every man, woman, and child, in the Methodist society, possesses an inherent right to legislate, to govern, and to "*interfere in the regulation of all its affairs*." We deny this principle; and dare any of the champions of the Association to the proof of the scriptural truth of their own proposition.

It is known by all the world, that this noise about rights, legislation, and government, is aimed against the Wesleyan ministry. The attempt is to make it subservient to the passions of the people; to despoil it of its divine origin and call: its scriptural prerogatives; its pure and distinctive character; and to trample it in the mire of democracy. We need not spend a moment in shewing, that the Wesleyan ministry has never yet rested on the *basis* of this resolution; and we deny the power assumed by

the Association to "*interfere*" with this department of Methodism, in the manner they declare to be their right. The stress of the controversy lies on this point. The resolution of the Association claims the right of "*interference*," on the part of the members of the church, in "*all its affairs*;" and, consequently, with ALL the functions, duties, and prerogatives of the ministerial office. On this question, we join issue with the Association. We flatly and unequivocally deny that the members of the church possess a right to interfere in *all things* with the functions of the ministry.

THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE, ITSELF, IS OF DIVINE APPOINTMENT.

The great Head of the church has fixed this office by the exercise of his own legislative prerogative. It is a part of the system of Christianity, and is inherent in its economical provisions. Through all the generations in which it was arranged that the Mosaic law should continue, the office of priesthood remained, and the system would have lost its identity and peculiar characteristic, had that part of it ceased to be observed. The same is the case in reference to the ministerial office in Christianity. It is not an accident, to be or not to be, as circumstances may occur; but it belongs to the economy itself, and wherever the one is established, the other, in some of its names and modifications, must co-exist. It is true, that some of the *varieties* of the office have ceased, since primitive times, because they had respect to that which was extraordinary or miraculous. When testimony was to be given to the personal perfections of Christ—the truth of his doctrines, miracles, death and resurrection—it was essential that persons should be employed who had been eye and ear witnesses. Hence, the Apostolic office required that they should have seen the Lord, and be *sent* by him. But, in this case, this was extraordinary. The ordinary functions of the ministerial office belonged to them as well. They were pastors, elders, evangelists, as well as Apostles. We behold them not merely bearing testimony to the facts of the gospel, but planting churches, exercising the pastoral care and office over them, and teaching the whole doctrine of Christ. Whilst the sacred canon was incomplete, it was necessary that the prophetic spirit should be given; at least, to some—that the remaining revelations from God might be received and transmitted—that the evangelical narrative should be finished, and the whole confirmed and established by miracles. Hence, the terms employed to designate the ministerial office, in some of its functions, have relation to these extraordinary events. With the necessity, they have ceased; but the ordinary functions of the ministry remain, as a part of the great evangelical economy, through all ages, in all places, and as an integral part of the Christian church itself. Our proof of this proposition must necessarily be limited to a very few references to the sacred writings.

In St. Paul's beautiful comparison of the church to the human body, we find the ministerial offices enumerated as a part—(see 1st Cor. xii. chapter from verse 12 to 31, inclusive):—"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first Apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." Whatever position the ministry may hold in the body—whether the foot or the hand, or the eye or the ear—it is evidently a part. And the language of the Apostle may be addressed to all who murmur and complain: "If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it, therefore, not of the body? And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it, therefore, not of the

body?—If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him." The point to which we wish to invite attention, is, the fact that the ministerial office, in all its varieties, is identified with the body of Christ. It is not an office, *ab extra*, existing accidentally; or raised up for extraordinary occasions, like many of the Jewish prophets, and then passing away, having accomplished its functions. Instead of this being the case, it is represented as belonging to the identity of the body; and wherever it may be placed, it is essential to the unity, beauty, vitality, and working of the whole. Then the proof that the church is to be perpetuated, through all time, will be evidence that the ministry, in its distinctive, isolated, and acknowledged character, is to be perpetuated too. Wherever the body exists, the members composing it must exist, or it is not the body of Christ. It may be some mutilated idol, set up in its place, destitute of the perfections, symmetry, members, senses, and vitality of the body of which Christ is the head; and, if so, as lifeless as one of the statues in St. Paul's, or the slumbering mummy of an Egyptian mausoleum.

In the account given by the Apostle of the fruits of the Saviour's perfected work and intercession, we find the gifts essential to the ministry. Hence, the ministerial office, and the grace necessary to its discharge, arise out of the grand mediatorial scheme, and are, consequently, identified with it:—"Therefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts un to men.—(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up, far above all heavens, that he might fill all things).—And he gave some Apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried away by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and the cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Many valuable and important lessons might be selected from this passage suited to the present circumstances of our connexion, but we have selected it for the single purpose of showing, that the ministerial office is here connected with the mediatorial power of Christ, and as one of the "gifts" which result from its exercise. Those "gifts," in other respects, are uniform and perpetual. The mediator procures for the world of sinners repentance towards God; for all believers the pardon of sin—the adoption of grace—the sanctification of the spirit—communion with the Father—succour both in life and death—and then the peace of heaven. As it does not fail in any of these points, there is no reason to conclude that it does so in any other, and that the "gift" of the ministry will continue to be one of the fruits of the Saviour's mediatorial power, "till he shall give up the kingdom to God even the Father." From this connexion, it is evident that the ministry belongs to the grace which results from the mediation of Christ, for the perpetuity of his church, and the salvation of the world—that it belongs essentially to the great scheme of love and mercy, in bringing an alienated race into a state of reconciliation—that as a ministry of the Holy Spirit procured by the atonement and intercession of our Lord, and actually employed to bring man into a state of spiritual probation, enlighten his dark path, excite him to penitence, and, if obeyed, lead him into all the purity and comfort of a converted state; so also, in subordination to that, the ministry of men set apart for the purpose, and filled with all suitable gifts for the vocation, is equally a provision of the spiritual kingdom of our Redeemer. The ministry of the Spirit is internal, silent, searching, and, in power, always operating on the principles of the evangelical covenant, and flowing in the channel of redemption;—the living ministry is intended to be co-incident with the other, only to be external, suited to the natural state and wants of man, and agreeing to that visible form into which it has pleased God to place his church in this world.

Then, on this principle, the office of the ministry rests on the highest authority, and the most secure arrangement. It is a part of the great and sublime economy which has its centre of operation on the mediatorial throne; but which extends its exquisite and final arrangements through the church and the world, for the edification of the one, and the salvation of the other. In exact proportion as the mediatorial government of our Lord develops its principles, pours forth its grace, exerts its power, sets up its dominion, gains its true glories, and establishes its peace, purity and love in these regions of earth and sin—in that proportion the office of the ministry will be en-

riched with "the gifts he received for men"—and standing in humble, pure, separated, but honoured and elevated dignity, in the world, will be hailed as a divine institution, and as intimately associated with the highest grace of God, and the most valuable interests and happiness of man.

We adduce one other proof—from amongst many—of the divinity and intended perpetuity of the ministerial office. When our Lord sent his Apostles to preach the gospel after his resurrection, he added—"and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Two things are obvious from this—that the ministry was to continue to the end of the world—and that Christ would be with his faithful servants to encourage them in their duties. Here again we perceive that the sacred ministry is made identical with the Christian dispensation. It is the last, and intended to continue to the end of time and the consummation of all things; and the successors of the Apostles are to remain as long as the dispensation itself. That the declaration cannot be limited to the Apostles personally, is evident from its terms. Our Lord knew that they would not live to the end of the world; but, like other men, they would serve their generation by the will of God, and then sleep with their fathers. But they were the types and representatives of a race of men, who should remain through all ages, and, as the foremost of the class, they received the promise; but they received it for their successors as well as themselves, as Adam received the promise of Redemption, both for himself and for all his children.

Let us now examine the principle of the delegates as affecting this question.—They claim "the right of interference of the members of the church, in the regulation of all its affairs." The office of the ministry is one "of the affairs" of the church, and we are certain, we do the delegates no injustice, when we affirm that their main intention is, to regulate *this affair*. They assert their *right* then to *interfere* with this office. They do not inform us whence they derive this right; or in what particulars, and to what extent, the interference is to be carried. We grant that the members of the church have inalienable rights. They have a right to all the external ordinances, and to the communion and provisions of the church, as long as they walk according to its rules; and if they are raised by the call of God to offices, they have the right freely to exercise their functions as long as they do it in conformity with the laws. But the proposition of the delegates sets up an undefined, and, consequently, an absolute right to interfere, on the part of those who hold no office, in all the affairs of the ministry. Then, according to this, the office is dependent upon them. They claim the right of creating it—shaping its powers—modifying its operations—and, if they choose, altering its structure—or annulling it altogether. We believe we do not overstate the case. On a former occasion, Mr. Gordon, the author of the resolution, stated his opinion on this subject very clearly. He said, at that time, "I know of no inherent rights of the preachers of the gospel. They are given by the people; how can they be otherwise?"—"The people choose a man as their minister."—"What the people give, they can control; what they can control, they can take away."—And—"There are no rights but what you give." This is obviously placing the ministerial office on the will and taste of the people. If our previous remarks on the divine origin and appointment of this office are well founded (and we challenge the delegates to disprove them), then the assumption of this *radical* right is a profane invasion of the prerogatives of the Deity, the mediatorial glories of the Son of God, and the settled order of his kingdom. The democratical theory that the *people* are the fountain of all power in the state, so delightful to the pride and vanity of the age, is here borne triumphantly from the world into the church, and placed as the *basis* of the new order of things in Christianity. We remind the fond advocates of this principle, that there is such a book as the bible; that Christians have been in the habit of acknowledging it as divine; and that its lessons of instruction place the church in the hands of its founder, not theirs—its powers and authority in its head, not the people—its economical arrangements in its great bishop and shepherd, not the variable, fleeting, and self-interested opinions of man—and its ministry as an office *jure divino*, not dependent upon the votes of a human constituency.

We ask, is not the ministry first in order in every known instance of the establishment of a church? If so we should like to know how it originates with the church, which, in fact, it instrumentally creates. Did not the ministry of St. Paul exist before the churches of the Gentiles, which he planted? Did not the ministry of Wesley exist before the societies which he, in the exercise of his functions, united in church fellowship? At the present moment does not the ministerial office precede in the person of some humble missionary, the existence of the church in any of the destitute pagan nations? And even in our own country, at this moment, the independent body are obliged to do good against their own principles, for they send Home

Missionaries to convert sinners and to collect churches in the dark parts of this country—these churches are formed by the ministry, not the ministry by the churches: The attempt of our reformers is to remove this sacred office from that lofty pedestal of divine appointment on which it is placed by the holy scriptures, to the pivot of human opinion, where it may be made, like the weather-cock, to turn to every gust of passion and folly, or to be hurled and rolled in the mire, and kicked and cuffed at the caprice of every babbler in religious revolution. They profess to do all this of *right*. We want to know whence they derived their right? We can understand on what authority the ministry is divine. It is so on the ground of a divine origin and appointment, fully and clearly expressed in the New Testament. But how it can be a divine ordinance, and yet a human institution—liable to the modifications, changes, *interferences*, and even abrogation of the church—at the same time, we confess we cannot comprehend. One of these claims must be false and ill-founded. If the authority of the great Head of the church to fix the ministry as a permanent provision in the economy of Christianity is valid, then the assumption of the delegates is a bold and profane invasion of the authority of our Lord; if their claim is legal, then we maintain that the bible is of no authority; but human opinion is the origin of all power, and natural—not revealed religion, is that which we are bound to espouse.

THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY, AND THE QUALIFICATIONS WHICH PREPARE FOR ITS SUCCESSFUL DISCHARGE, ARE DIRECTLY DIVINE.

We mean by this, that the election, the anointing, the commission, and the gifts which unite to authorise and qualify a Christian to discharge the duties of the ministry, are from God; not remotely, but immediately. That there is a difference between the grace that gives piety, and "the grace to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ." That the call to "this office and ministry" is super-added to the privileges and purity of personal piety, and none can lawfully enter it, or efficiently discharge its duties, but such as are called of God. The evidence of this is clear. *Called, ordained, made, entrusted, sent forth, ambassadors, stewards of the mysteries of God*, are terms employed to designate the inauguration of ministers into their office, and the dependent manner in which they hold it. Hence our Lord said—"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and *ordained* you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." St. Paul designates himself—"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, *called* to be an Apostle, *separated* unto the Gospel of God." And adds—"But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." And again—"Our sufficiency is of God, who also hath *made us* able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter; but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." "Let a man so account of us as of the *ministers* of Christ, and *stewards* of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in *stewards* that a man be found faithful."—"For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me: yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a *dispensation* of the Gospel is *committed* unto me." "According to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was *committed* to my trust. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, *putting me* into the ministry."—Lest it should be thought that these terms are peculiar to the Apostolic office, we find St. Paul using similar language respecting those who occupied inferior stations. "And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the Elders of the church." When they were in his presence, amongst other things he says to them, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath *made you* overseers, to feed the church of God, which *he* hath purchased with his own blood." To Timothy he says—"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the *gift* of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands. That good thing which was *committed* unto thee keep, by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us."

These passages, which might be greatly multiplied, clearly show that the persons who are really the ministers of the gospel are not so by the appointment of any human authority; but by the ordination and call of God. This is in perfect harmony with the nature of the Christian dispensation, and the ends it proposes. It is the bestowment of spiritual blessings—the call of sinners to repentance—and the edification of those who believe in Christ. This represents it as pre-eminently divine. Religion, in its progress through the world, is the work of God—the evolutions of His government—the operations of His grace—the exercise of His pardoning mercy—the display and offer of the divine atonement—the ministry of His spirit—and the extension of His kingdom. It is not likely that a work of this purely religious and spiritual character would be left to the force of human reason, the arts of secular eloquence, and the ac-

cident of men choosing the office of the ministry as a matter of mere taste. Besides, from the peculiarly divine nature of religion, this kind of instrumentality could not accomplish it. The end proposed is to bring sinners to God, to humble them in penitence, to invest them with Christian privileges, to regenerate the heart, to raise them to life and joy, to dress them in the robes of righteousness, and to lead them beside the still waters of spiritual consolation. As the end is purely spiritual and religious, the instrumentality employed must agree to the design. Hence, if a person called to this office is previously occupied in secular pursuits, the election to this trust, the elevation of the mind, the tone of piety necessary, the devotion of the soul to these particular duties, and a separation to, and the energetic discharge of the functions of the office will give a perfectly new turn to the tastes and tendencies of the soul. The heart cannot be made the depository of this "*heavenly treasure*," and the lips the channel of conveying it to others, without the person so engaged being in a peculiar manner and degree the minister, the ambassador, and the servant of God.

With this prerogative of Diety in the appointment of his ministry, the principle of the delegates directly interferes. It claims the "right of interference of the members of the church in the regulation of all its affairs;" and, consequently, in this. Explained and elucidated by other parts of these famous speeches, and, indeed, the whole of the proceedings of the Association, we cannot be mistaken as to their bearing on this branch of the question. These levellers have repeatedly stated, both in conversation and in print, that they have no objection against the private character of their ministers, it is only against their public and ministerial character that they object. As men and as Christians, they allow that they possess an average share of piety, charity, amiability, and virtue. But as *ministers*, they object to them as knaves, tyrants, usurpers, oppressors; and all the epithets of reproach and scandal which the language can furnish are selected to hold up—not the man, but the minister—to the contempt and hatred of the world.

This shews the *animus* of the opposition most fully. It is against that *official* character in which the Head of the church has clothed his ministers, that the Association levels its maledictions. These gentlemen, of equal rights, do credit to that part of the character of ministers which is just on a level with their own—their humanity and their Christian graces and virtues;—but when they appear clad in robes of office, though they have been placed upon them by the hands of their Lord and Saviour, they at once attempt to tear them to shreds, for the purpose of reducing the wearer to an equality with themselves. Considered in no higher a light than as matter of mere justice, there is something extremely unfair in this. A minister is nothing but a minister: he is placed on an isolated spot in the great social system—he is debarred from commercial speculation and pursuits, and that wealth and consideration which this class of the community often acquire—he is shut out from the walks of science, literature, and the arts, as a profession, and can only engage in these things as an anonymous contributor to the periodicals—he cannot engage in the strife of political debate, and, however talented, raise himself to the station and honour of a legislator; and yet, he is an object of envy—and envy by those who have the world open before them: to all its wealth, its honours, its professions, and its fame. The ways of God are all equal; and when it pleases him to place some official honour, of a religious nature, on ministers, he exacts an equivalent. They are reduced to a nonentity, in other respects: their office, honours, and persons are equally despised in the world.

But it is not in this light we consider the subject. Any injustice done to ministers, as men, merely, is of trifling importance. If they are despised, scorned, lampooned—if they are held up to reproach, contempt, and ridicule—if they are saved the trouble of exercising any will of their own, by taking such things as are prepared for them—if they are made the sport of strife, and rocked in the storm of angry contention—they must make up their minds to endure all this. They are called to recollect who was "*despised and rejected of men*," and kindle their own love and zeal by meditating on the example of the Apostles, martyrs, and confessors of old. But their office they have no *power* to surrender. If they are weary of bearing the cross, let them settle the matter with their divine Master; and if he permit, give up the deposit they received from him into his own hands again. But they have no *right* to give it into the hands of a greedy, ambitious, and rampant democracy. Like a sand desert, it is always absorbing, and never satisfied. Whilst a good soil drinks in the dews and rains of heaven, and makes a grateful return of smiling corn, or blooming and fragrant pasturage; the arid wilderness receives the blessings of heaven, but continues thirsty and barren still. So it is with our radicalism: the wisdom, the piety, the gifts, the labours of the true ministers of God descend like refreshing rain on the simple of heart, the devout, the believing, and the pure; whilst they impart no fertility to those who, instead of receiving the message and the grace with gratitude, imagine that the instrument is too much honoured in his employment; and, refusing to receive God's gifts at his hands, remains in a state of barrenness and misery.

As we have taken leave to tell ministers that they have no right to surrender their commission into the hands of "*the people*," so we tell the Association that they have not only no right to demand it, but that the demand itself demonstrates their vanity, assurance, and unblushing impudence. Pray, gentlemen of the delegation, did you or God put the Wesleyan ministers into their office? If you, in the exercise of your Association functions, placed this power in the hands of the preachers, then, according to your orator and lawgiver, you have the right to annul. But if it has been received from a higher, a heavenly source, you have no right to demand it; it does not belong to you—it does not belong to its possessors—it belongs to God, who gave it. If you object to the directly divine call of the Wesleyan ministry, and attribute it to a mere human agency, then we ask—was that agency yours? Did you, gentlemen of the Association, raise up this ministry, as you require the surrender of its powers into your own hands? No. Instrumentally, it is the ministry trained and raised up by John Wesley; and since his days, by those who were taught in his school. It is a modest request, most assuredly, made by the Association—viz., that about thirteen hundred ministers, belonging to the Wesleyan connexion, who profess to have received their call and commission, in the first degree, from the Head of the church, and, in the second from the Conference, should humbly surrender their trust to them, and take it up again, under such "interferences" as they shall choose to exercise, and such conditions as they may think well to attach to it. And pray—a stranger from another world would ask—who are these gentlemen? They must be persons of great consideration, great wisdom, great piety, great age, and great numbers. So every one would imagine from the demand. And who are they, in fact? The airy and floating particles which have exhaled from a body of three hundred and sixty thousand professing Christians, and being too light for adhesion to the solid and compact body to which they were attached, flew, by an instinctive impulse, to the sound of discord, and united in the Manchester Tabernacle, as a sand hill, to receive the homage of the nodding Alps. But are they particles compared with the Alpine mountains, when put in contrast with the Wesleyan body? We do not disparage them; and all we choose to say is, it is too much for *such as they are* to demand the surrender of the Wesleyan ministry into their hands.

Indeed, the proposition itself is another proof of the insanity of faction. As if the assembled disaffection of the connexion had a right to demand that which no set of men have the right to give—the ministry; to be fashioned after their own democratic notions. We beg to tell these gentlemen that their kindness will be dispensed with—that they will be most assuredly saved the trouble of being the conservators of the Wesleyan ministry—and that there is no intention in those who hold the office to submit it to their tempering and modifying capacity. It has been safe hitherto in the hands and under the guidance of its divine author. Imbued and animated by His Spirit, it has proved itself vital and powerful. By the blessing which has been upon it, it has been instrumental in leading myriads of lost sinners to Christ, and spreading scriptural religion largely through the four quarters of the world. We know *what it has been* in the hands of God—we know not *what it would be* in the hands of a democracy, and we are not prepared to make the exchange.

THE DOCTRINES AND PRECEPTS TAUGHT BY A DIVINELY COMMISSIONED MINISTRY ARE FURNISHED BY THE WORD OF GOD.

Properly speaking, the duties of preachers are purely *ministerial*. They have not the liberty to frame a system of doctrines, to devise ordinances and terms of communion, or to enforce a code of laws and morals, resting on their own independent *dicta*. They are *entrusted* with the gospel, and are simply the administrators of its truths, provisions, and ordinances; to ascertain the meaning of the Word of God, by diligent study and humble prayer, and then, pointedly, faithfully, and fully to exhibit the truth, by such modes of argument, illustration, and appeal as are best calculated to enlighten the mind, awaken the conscience, and lead to experimental and practical piety, appears to be the proper calling of a preacher of the gospel. He can have no liberty in the case, except such liberty as appears to have been granted to the prophets themselves, to throw the truths into such forms of thought and language as their own peculiar genius makes natural and easy. This is the extent of their *eclectic* rights. Can they have the right to preach any other gospel than that which has been inspired and given to the world in our holy books? Can they have the right to lay any other foundation of salvation than that which has been laid?—or to build on this foundation any other superstructure of experimental and practical religion, than that which is taught in the promises, descriptions, and examples of the word of God? Now the new constitution to be prepared for Methodism is to be framed on "the principle of the right of interference of the members of the church, in the regulation of *all its affairs*," consequently, in its doctrines. Let us examine this claim as applicable to this question.

In case of a church becoming corrupt and heterodox in sentiment, it claims for it the right of forcing their opinions on their ministers. This is the legitimate conclusion. If they have the right to interfere in "*all the affairs*" of the church, this must be intended; and, as they do not stop at any given point in their interference, of course it sets up the claim of an unlimited and universal dictation. All history, alas! informs us how possible it is for the spirit of religion to be dissipated in a Christian community, and for the professing members to become heretical in opinion. If, at any time, a church should become Socinian in sentiment—deny the Godhead of our Lord—the atonement for sin—the grand scheme of mediation—the justification of the sinner by grace through faith—the influence and sanctification of the Holy Spirit, and all those blessings of experimental religion which emanate from these vital truths; then, according to this claim, it must be their right to force their sentiments on their preachers, and compel them to dole out a meagre Unitarianism, instead of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God." The Association indignantly ask—may we not be trusted? We reply—no, you may not. Others have been led into this bog, and why may not this be your call. The fact is, we would trust no class of men with this precious and invaluable deposit. The conservation of sound doctrine should be placed, as much as possible, beyond the reach of the changeable mind and corruptible principles of living man. In Methodism it is so placed at present, and we hope the day is very distant when it will be removed from the safe keeping of the Poll Deed.

These gentlemen will deny any intention of altering the Methodist doctrine.—We do not charge them with the intention of doing so; but with the assertion of a principle, and the claim of a right, which would, in all probability, lead to it. What they do claim is the right of "*interference*," and that without limit. It is in the nature of radicalism to have no right unused. It is the spirit of the movement to put every power it possesses in motion, and at every opportunity, to augment the impetus and attain the distinction of being at the bottom of the hill, as soon as possible, surrounded by the ruin it has occasioned. Who can doubt, if the Association, and men of their spirit, should obtain the right to interfere with the doctrines preached in our pulpits, it would long lie dormant. They, with a most industrious assiduity, are found present every where—doing every thing—touching every spring of the machine which they possibly can; while good and unsuspicious men sleep, these enemies are awake, and sowing their tares in every direction. Would they, if they could, leave the ministry of the word *unreformed*? Not they, indeed. This, they will discover, is the fountain; and if there must be pure and purified water in the sanctuary, it must be necessary to purify the fountain. The attack would not be made, in the first instance, on the vital doctrines of the gospel, but it would soon be made on those principles, and, especially, the practices and habits that legitimately flow from them. Abstractions would be tolerated, but the detail of religious obligation and duty would not be allowed. We recollect, several months ago, the preachers of Liverpool South Circuit met the societies, and calmly and affectionately cautioned the members against the evils to which, at that time, they were exposed. In a few days, those ministers found themselves posted in the public papers, by the Association, who charged them with the grossest crimes, for the performance of this duty. Supposing these men had the "*right to interfere*," within the pale of the church, instead of expressing themselves in the public prints, would they have refused to use it in the same manner? No; and in their hands the gospel would soon be pared down to common-place generalization: at best, nothing would be allowed to the poor automaton preacher but to enunciate their views, and guard with especial caution against touching their rights.

Such is the march of intellect in our days, that the parties who need to be taught and instructed now claim the absolute right of giving the teachers of religion their credentials, and also the syllabus of truths they choose to have preached to themselves. Poor old Richard Baxter has left his successors in the ministry instructions how to catechize families, adults as well as children, and has founded his instructions on his own practice. We wonder how this venerable divine would be received in our day, with his interrogations in his hand?

In the mean time, the order of heaven's law is not altered by the arrogant claims and assumptions of the Manchester delegates. The true minister, called of God to his employment, has still the right to preach the unadulterated gospel, without let or hindrance. He is obliged, on the principles and conditions of his calling, to adhere to the truth, and not to surrender that truth to any class of men on earth. We believe that this is the position in which the Wesleyan ministers stand at this moment. They are put on their trial, by the circumstances of the times. The current runs against the just rights and great responsibilities of their stewardship. Religion is against the proud, self-sufficient, and levelling spirit of the age; and no wonder if that spirit is

against it. Decency and old prejudices will not allow a direct attack on the doctrines and precepts of the bible; and the men who are their prototype and heralds are singled out for assault. Great consequences hang on this contest—not only as regards this age, but ages to come. The truth never failed to support its firm and inflexible adherents. God never countenanced turn-coats and cowards. The changes going on in this mutable world, in commerce, legislation, and arrangements of power, cannot alter the relations of man to God—the truth of the bible—the immutable nature of religion—or the obligations of both pastors and people. That which has been deposited with the Wesleyan ministry from the beginning, is the gospel of God, our Saviour;—the attempt of this fanaticism is, to wrest this precious boon from their hands, and to make its administration agree to the views and feelings of a ranting and haughty democracy. If it is fashioned to that, it must lose its present character; and the responsibility is with those who hold the trust. We have no doubt they will be faithful. Personal abuse and calumny—the suspicion of their principles and character—the loss of their temporal support, by the “*stoppage of the supplies*”—nay, their banishment into rude and distant climes; or, if it should please God, imprisonment at home—they can endure: but let no man touch their *divine charter*. They hold it on a superhuman tenure; and that array of party and brutal violence, which, by its numbers, would wrest it out of their hands, is an outrage on the law, economy, and grace, of the great Head of the Church, who has deposited the gospel with his servants—not as a subject of party litigation and strife; but to be simply, faithfully, and affectionately dispensed—for the salvation of a lost and ruined world.

THE METHODIST NEW CONNEXION AND ITS GOVERNMENT.

Lay delegation in the Methodist Conference appears to be fervently desired by most of the delegates who, on a late occasion, assembled in Manchester, as essentially requisite to introduce “a scriptural reform in Methodism.” Mr. Wesley’s close, diligent, and devout study of the Holy Scriptures, from his youth even to a good old age, is so well known as not to be disputed; and yet, he is considered by these worthies to have established a system of church order, which is most clearly and extensively at variance with the principles of the New Testament! How these ecclesiastical politicians magnify themselves at the expense of this great and good man, whom they profess to admire and venerate! Having heard some three or four *ex parte* statements as evidences of a general tyranny and corruption in the government of the connexion, they proceeded, after some dispute, to pass a resolution which demands lay delegation; and “if this be conceded, every thing else,” it was said, “will follow, to place Methodism on a scriptural basis.” We most conscientiously dissent from the conclusion of this reforming assembly, even though, to some of its leading members, the right of popular interference in all matters of church discipline, seems to be written in “the book of the Lord” as with a sunbeam. It is our conviction, that if lay delegation were to be granted to the arrogant claims of any number of unruly and ambitious men, “every thing else would follow,” to *revolutionize* the body, and to fix Methodism on an *unscriptural foundation*. It has thus operated in the *New Connexion*. We will prove this position by selecting some measures that would arise out of lay delegation, and be contrary to “the oracles of God.”

The preachers of God’s holy gospel will have no control over the admission or expulsion of members of society.

The powerlessness of the ministry in reference to these two important particulars, immediately followed lay delegation in the New Connexion. Hence, we read in the general rules of that body—“The leaders’ meeting shall determine on the admission and expulsion of members.” The power with which this law invests a number of leaders, we pronounce to be *anti-scriptural*; for such authority appertains, not to minor office-bearers, but to the ministers of Christ. It is unto these that the right of admitting persons into the church of God belongs. We will adduce, in proof of this assertion, the commission which they have received, not from the church, but from the hands of their Lord and Master, and it reads as follows:—“Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” By the terms of this divine warrant, it is evidently the duty of ministers to disciple the fallen population of this vast globe, and to receive them into the church by the administration of baptism. Did not the Apostles to whom it was primarily given, thus practically un-

derstand its import? On the day of Pentecost, "about three thousand souls were added to the church;" and by whom was this glorious addition made? Undoubtedly, by the men who, by God's blessing, disciplined and baptized them.

As ministers are to receive persons into the church, so they have a right to exclude from it the unworthy. From members of depraved hearts and lives, Timothy was commanded to "turn away." How? By deserting the church which these godless members disgraced and injured? Most assuredly not. He was to separate them from the house of God, as Paul did "Hymenæus and Alexander, whom," says he, "I delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." The correctness of this interpretation is, we are inclined to think, confirmed in the charge which the inspired Apostle gave to Titus, saying—"A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject." This appellation—the only text in Scripture where it occurs—Mr. Wesley says, "evidently means, a man that obstinately persists in contending about foolish questions, and thereby occasions strife and animosities, schisms and parties in the church." Such an individual, whatever might be his talents or station, Paul makes it imperative upon Titus to "reject." Deeming him an enemy to the peace and prosperity of the church, Titus was bound—to whatever charges of tyranny, apathy, and unkindness it might expose his ministerial reputation—to expel him from its communion.—That God holds ministers responsible for the expulsion of dishonourable and injurious members is likewise apparent to us, from the rebuke which was given by Him that "hath the sharp sword with two edges, to the angel of the church in Pergamos," for allowing persons to remain in its fellowship, after they had fallen into the sinful errors of Balaam and of the Nicolaitanes. If the expulsion of these glaring offenders were not the minister's duty, but the duty of the inferior officers of the church, how is it that the *innocent* was admonished, while the *guilty* escaped all correction? It is certainly due to Christ to believe, that this judicial punishment was not their office to award. No. It is not enjoined upon such a class of officers in the New Testament. Had it been their duty, it would have had a conspicuous place in Paul's epistles to the churches, with directions how to perform it in the most beneficial manner; and it would, therefore, have been omitted in his letters to Timothy and Titus, as one of the rights of the pastoral office. There is, indeed, one of his epistles which some individuals think recognises the right of the church to expel from its privileges. But they forget or overlook, that in this case of the criminal member at Corinth, the Apostle assumed the functions of both judge and jury, saying, according to Dr. Doddridge, "I have both judged and passed sentence upon him;" and he required the Corinthians, in the name of Christ, to see that the judgment of excision which he had solemnly pronounced was duly carried into execution. The guilty man was, agreeably to the Apostle's commandment, cut off from the church that he had awfully scandalized by his immorality; and it is said, "the punishment" was "inflicted of many;" a clause which, we believe, Mr. Wesley correctly interprets—"Not only by the rulers of the church: the whole congregation acquiesced in the sentence;" they were convinced that the glory of God, the honour of Christianity, and the good of the transgressor, justified the act of his excommunication. This severe procedure was an instance of *their obedience to ministerial authority*, for which Paul congratulates them: "For to this end did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things."—2 Cor. 2, 9.

Having asserted and vindicated the scriptural rights of the ministerial office, in relation to the admission and expulsion of members of society, we are, at the same time, free to declare, that we have not the least desire to see these important prerogatives without any *check* on their exercise, in the Wesleyan connexion. They are—and, indeed, they long have been—under a wholesome and *sufficient* restraint, by the two following well-known rules:—"The leaders' meeting has a right to declare any person on trial improper to be received into the society; and after such declaration, the superintendent shall not admit such person into society.—No person must be expelled from the society for any breach of our rules, or even for manifest immorality, till such fact has been proved at a leaders' meeting."

Though the observance of these regulations must prevent preachers abusing the power which the Redeemer, who "counted them worthy, putting them into the ministry," has committed to their trust; yet, under the pretext of their insufficiency, violent and dishonourable plans, have, by a party of misguided laymen, been adopted, and are in progress, to *usurp* this authority, without even leaving to God's ministers any curb upon its wanton administration. Such an unscriptural enterprise, lay delegation would as speedily and effectually accomplish in the Old, as it did in the New connexion. The preachers in that community ought to "feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof;" to "rule well," and so "be counted worthy of double honour;" but to call them rulers who are happy in the obedience and submission of their societies, would,

we are persuaded, be to insult them. Though they may "know how to rule their own house," yet they are not permitted to "take care of the church of God;" for in the admission and expulsion of members of society, they are only the mere mouth-piece of lay governors. An honourable attempt was made at the Conference of 1822, to elevate them a little from their helpless and degraded condition, by conceding to them a degree of controul over the reception of new members. A resolution to this effect was brought before the assembly of ministers and delegates, and we shall make no apology for laying it before our readers. It reads as follows:—"That no person can be admitted into any of our societies without the concurrence of the superintendent preacher, except there be three-fourths of the leaders and society-stewards in favour of it." It is very probable, that some of the superintendents brought forward this reform bill, because they found their title empty and useless, being truly unconnected with any superintending power; they had also seen, how often two or three wealthy or loquacious leaders could command a majority on any question, right or wrong, which they espoused. As the measure of reform was exceedingly moderate, it ought to have become the *law* of the New connexion land. And did it not? NO! Had not the Conference power to legalize the bill? NO! Is not that Conference the supreme legislative assembly of the body? NO! The supreme legislative authority is, *de facto*, in the circuit quarterly meetings. If any of our readers doubt this position, let them consider the humbling and mortifying preamble to the resolution:—"That the following be submitted to the quarterly meetings of our different circuits, in order to be decided upon next Conference." Now, it is clear as day, that this reform bill was to be *really* decided by the laity in the quarterly meetings, and then to be *formally* settled at the Conference of 1823. And what was the nature of this decision? Did the preachers gain in the circuit assemblies, where they would, doubtless, put forth all their powers of logic and rhetoric, the limited *veto* on the admission of new members? No! They were doomed to remain only "*speaking* brethren!" The law of 1823 is confined to *re-admissions*, and does not even name the superintendents! We find it in the Minutes thus expressed: "That no person who has been a member of any of our societies, but has withdrawn, or has been expelled therefrom, shall be re-admitted, except there be three-fourths of the leaders' meeting in favour of such person's re-admission." This resolution demonstrates, that the efforts of the preachers to recover a small portion of their scriptural authority, terminated, as exertions in their favour in that community generally do, in painful disappointment.

Is such the working of lay delegation? It is not at all surprising that some restless and aspiring leaders, who are imbued with the spirit of Diotrephes, wish to introduce it into the Wesleyan connexion, that they may become masters in Israel, and the preachers humbled to merely talking brethren in their presence. And are their revolutionizing schemes to succeed? Is the body to be subjected to the sovereignty of lay delegation? Never; no, never! We are fully assured that heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than the strong and lovely fabric of Methodism shall be demolished by the confederates of a rampant radicalism. The determination expressed by the preachers at the late district meeting in the metropolis, will be most cordially echoed by their brethren in the ministry; and in that decision, we are confident, they will be vigorously supported by an overwhelming majority of the people committed to their charge:—"Never will we agree to mutilate or alter the essential principles of that pure and simple constitution which, under God, was confided to us as a sacred deposit by the Rev. John Wesley."

EPSILON.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Correspondence.

MANCHESTER DELEGATE MEETING—A FAILURE!!

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—The portentous cloud which has so long darkened the hemisphere, and threatened the interests of Methodism, and which is said to be composed of the mightiest elements by those who, thrusting their heads into it, have made it their "fool's cap," after being almost dissipated in Lincoln's Inn, made another attempt to burst in something like grand style, a short time since, in Manchester. Many a magician essayed to brew a tempest—"sweltered venom" rose in the market—the public were invited to witness the effect—"strange rumours were abroad," and—at length the awful hour of Wesleyan doom arrived, and the meeting of *Wesleyan Delegates* was held. The pro-

ceedings of this assembly have been given to the world, by (to quote Dr. Warren, the great master, or, as he appeared during some of the proceedings, the mastered spirit of the faction), the *forbearing, charitable, able, eloquent, elegant, Christian Advocate*; a paper which the same Scotch Doctor tells us, "is entitled to the respect and support of the literary and Christian portion of the community." We are aware that to appreciate the force and consistency of this commendation, it is necessary, *we should be just as remarkable for literary attainments and Christian feeling as Dr. Warren himself*. We fear it will be lost upon those individuals who may differ from him in either respects. The respectable editor of this respectable journal also received a vote of thanks from the collective wisdom present. And who will say that he did not deserve it? He has certainly repaid the courtesy as the delegates intended he should, by taxing his ingenuity to make the best of a bad job. But some things are not worth mending; and the reporter's note-book account, of course the most faithful, must have been of this character. From this mass of eulogium we infer but one thing, viz.—that the account in the aforesaid journal, may be considered as official, or demi-official at least.

Considering the parade and fulsome bombast made concerning the greatness and overwhelming importance of the objects of the intended meeting—the loud "talk," and £800 worth of printing, which had been employed to create an interest throughout the kingdom; which interest was to be concentrated on the occasion—the boast and affidavit that 40,000 Wesleyans were favourable to the course adopted by the Association—and the assurances made by the leaders in the uproar (who are wholesale dealers in such commodities), to their followers, of nearly the universal sympathy of the connexion; some persons would, perhaps, be surprised at the aspect of things when the "gathering" was complete. We were not, however, surprised at all. We were too well acquainted with the Wesleyan body, and also with the empty, vain, moonshine, blow-bubble, Hudibrastic system, adopted by Dr. Warren and his abettors. Lodgings were eagerly sought for—*hundreds of delegates were expected*—who never came, of course; but, like prudent folks, concluded to stay at home, lest they should be minus their travelling expenses, as well as a donation towards lightening the Chancery "millstone" which bows down and sorely galls the necks of certain of the "Heads of Houses." For these and other reasons "best known to themselves," *hundreds did not come; nor, indeed, did one hundred of the many expected make their appearance*. On this ground, doubtless, it was, that the meeting was considered and denominated a "provisional" one;—in plain English it was not just the meeting the faction would like to regard in any other character. Too few were present for an acknowledgement that the strength of the party was concentrated—though that is the fact! Therefore, to keep up agitation the only chance left, it is said to be preparatory to one *ten times as large* (why not say a *thousand* and so do the thing in style?) to be held in Sheffield during the Conference. We quote this from the earnest hope of the dear Doctor.—Whether his hope of the next assembly be better founded than that which has just exploded, remains to be seen. We have no fear, as we have for some time regarded Dr. Warren's prophecies as equally veritable with the more celebrated ones of Old Mother Shipton.

An analysis of the list of circuits, delegates, &c., will illustrate the foregoing remarks. To make such an analysis is somewhat difficult, because some of the delegates whose names now for the first time appear in print, are involved in an obscurity very convenient to themselves and to their cause. This circumstance will, however, keep the following statements within the bounds of the fact and will prevent exaggeration, as all doubtful or *unknown gentlemen* will have the credit, whether they deserve it or no, of being Wesleyans.

At the last Conference there were *four hundred and eleven* circuits in Great Britain, Ireland, and the Shetland Islands. Now although universal Methodism is roused to sympathize with the Association in its designs and proceedings, we find, that from only *forty-three* circuits, representatives are said to be sent. Keighly is named, but it is the Protestant Methodist circuit! Leeds has a place in the list, but not a *single Wesleyan comes from thence*! Instead we have four doughty champions of Protestant Methodism:—Sigston, the veteran "Lord of Misrule," Mallinson, who affirms, that Sunday School teachers are *ipso facto* as good ministers of Jesus Christ as any preachers in the world—Johnson, a second-rate actor in the Leeds commotion, and one of the "tail." The Manchester branch of the Protestant Methodists is also named. This is bad fishing; eight hundred pounds spent to construct a net of "Remarks," "Appeals," "Answers," "Sufficient Final, &c." "Addresses," &c., and to set up "Lanterns," to allure and catch the Methodists which Dr. Warren employed for so many months with all his experience in gull-taking and flat fish netting; and, after all, to take the statement given us, only forty-three circuits caught in any shape, looks like *fishing out of season*. Here

we give the Association credit for all they claim; but, if further examined, the boast of even *forty-three* circuits will illustrate the elegant Sancho Panza-like language of one of the delegates, and to be a "reckoning the chickens before they are hatched."

The whole number of delegates named is *ninety-two*. Now let us see how this number is made up.

1.—Five are marked as "not official"—*ergo, officious!* We should like to know what is meant by "official?"—because if the term means *delegated by Wesleyan Quarterly, Leaders', or Local Preachers' meetings*, we challenge the Association to prove that any one of the delegates was an official person. Such formal delegation would have been blazoned in and by the meeting, as too good a thing to be lost. The delegates are *said to be sent*—so they should be to answer their character; and they ought to be sent by Wesleyans in the manner just stated. The history of the sending of some of these *sent* ones would be not a little curious. Till these delegates prove their commission, we shall mark them all as "not official," and dare them to establish the contrary. If "not official" means, not officers in the Wesleyan society, so much the worse for the delegates, few, if any of whom can prove that they are such officers.

2.—Seven are Protestant Methodists, who, after some demur as to the "deep and mature thought" which resulted in their invitation by the Committee, were graciously allowed to take "pot luck," and to "travel in company" with the meeting, as the learned Dr. Warren hath it.

3.—Twenty-five have been expelled from the Methodist society; and, no doubt some more also if we *knew* them. Yet these worthies would palm themselves on the world as Wesleyans, and as Wesleyan delegates.

4.—Fifty-three of these delegates are from Manchester, Liverpool, and the neighbourhood. Rochdale has *eight*; 1st Manchester, *seven*; Todmorden, *five*; Burnley, *four*; and Stockport, *four* representatives in the meeting. So much for the *general interest felt throughout the connexion*. A more complete failure could hardly be conceived. The Association will, of course, adopt their own method of accounting for this circumstance; but to unsophisticated minds the solution is easy.

It appears also, that out of 1070 preachers in Great Britain and Ireland, *three are said to be present*, viz.—the learned, amiable, and suspended Dr. Warren, "one of the hundred," and J. Lamb, and R. Emmett, who, we suppose, belong to the thousand. Will Mr. Lamb tell the public the history of his superannuation, and the nature of the charges now pending against him on that account? We trow not! But his history has followed him to England—and we know it. R. Emmett is a *nobody* kind of personage, who would fain be *somebody* if he could. Besides this trio, came the dealer in inspiration, the *quondam* Rev. GIN Gordon, of Dudley; so that *not one preacher bona fide in the work was present on the occasion*. Now, if this motley group think the Conference will be swayed by their harlequin decisions, they are, to quote the debate again, "reckoning without their host." As to the decisions themselves, we don't think them worth farther notice.

Some good has, however, been produced by the meeting. Dr. Warren's character is better understood—that is, if you take his own statement; to which, of course, we have no objection. "Hitherto," he says, "he had not written or spoken his mind fully: he should now speak out, in honest and faithful words." We have all along believed as much, but did not expect that the man of *deep and mature thought*, would have made such an admission. This justifies an observation made by one of the delegates just after the meeting, "We do not believe that Dr. W. is a sincere reformer. He would not have cried out had he not been pinched." Nay, so far from being, as he has all along professed to be, a *reformer* and *true conservative*, he, at the meeting, proclaimed himself a *destructive*. Hear him—"It was not easy to say how he could accomplish what he wished, without *abolishing* Methodism, or reducing it to a state of *ruin*." And these are the "deep thoughts of the mind" of the man who has been puffing his attachment to Methodism, and his determination to live and die a Methodist. So much for his consistency! If this do not open the eyes of his deluded admirers, we pity, but we do not fear them. The Doctor has unmasked himself—and we thank him for it.

The proceedings of the assembly prove also that Dr. Warren's influence is not so very great, even with his own party. Thus we read: "The motion of Dr. Warren was then put, and *negated without a division*." A new trait of character was elicited—*modesty*. The man who would not submit to the Conference—to his brethren in any way—to the Vice-Chancellor; but would recklessly pursue *his own course*, till stopped by Lord Lyndhurst, now says, that "such was his deference for public opinion," (i.e., the opinion of the delegates) "that he would tell them—what he would hardly tell any assembly else—that he should feel more satisfied and safe in adopting their decision than

in abiding by his own." We presume, he has found his own opinions not worth much lately; and they were evidently at a discount at the meeting, as the poor Doctor must have perceived, to the no small mortification of his towering ambition. The Salford delegate—author of the "Blessed Battle," and self-styled *Captain Barlow*—proclaimed himself "a vulgar and illiterate person," yet one who "means to be honest;" whilst Mr. Hay, from Carrickfergus, gravely told the meeting that it had been said in Ireland, "the British public will not pay much regard to what Samuel Hay says,"—which is true enough, until the British public become enamoured of twaddle and nonsense.

The list of letters, said to be received, hardly deserves notice. From the *circuits* named, they came not! From the towns, perhaps, they did; that is, from individuals in them. Nor does the account furnish evidence whether these precious epistles were favourable or unfavourable to the objects of the conclave. We should like nothing better than to see them *faithfully* published. But this we can hardly expect.

As a meeting of *Wesleyan* delegates it was a decided failure; and felt to be so by the Association. As a meeting of any sort, it was remarkable for want of unanimity. Heterogeneously composed, its debates were amusing, and its conclusions futile. It may, perhaps, answer the purpose of agitation; but if intended, as we know it was, as a demonstration of the strength of the party, it has miserably exhibited its weakness.—Thus much for the present. We have other matters in store.—Yours,

OMEGA.

Manchester, May 8th, 1835.

THE WESLEYAN THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION.

Sir—I make no apology in transmitting the following extract of a letter, received from a Student in the above establishment; it proves how groundless the fears of many, lest the young men resident there should lose their ministerial fervour and zeal:—

"I have not been above one Sabbath without preaching since I came, and have very frequently engaged on the week days; and, in several instances the power of God has been very manifest; and, in some places, souls have been saved. I preached last Sunday week three times; twice in the open air, and once in a small chapel. Last Sunday I preached three times in our new chapel at Richmond, and once in the open air. On Wednesday evening I preached in Tabernacle-square, to between two and three hundred people; and it is quite delightful to witness the feeling that pervades the whole assembly on those occasions; they seem alive to every expression, I hope you have commenced the *street work* in Liverpool: if not, do not delay—the people are dying and many of them without the knowledge of God. Pluck them, pluck them as brands from the burning."*
"G. M."

WILLIAM CARNE, ESQ., OF PENZANCE, AND THE ASSOCIATION.

(From the Watchman.)

A letter having been recently transmitted to the venerable William Carne, Esq., Penzance, containing a resolution of the committee of the Manchester Association, in which he was earnestly requested to preside at a late meeting in Manchester, and accompanied by representations which presumed, as usual, that he was favourable to the objects of the Association, Mr. Carne gave the following reply:—

"Penzance, 14th April, 1835.

Sir—Your letter of the 11th instant has greatly surprised me. If any person has represented me to you as favourable to the objects of your Association, I beg to state, that I have been entirely misrepresented; for, although I trust I shall always be anxious to obtain and preserve 'our just and scriptural rights as Wesleyan Methodists,' (to use your own expression,) I have from the first been fully convinced that the declared objects of the Association are such as (if they were obtained,) would not be at all beneficial to the connexion at large; and that the means adopted to obtain them are of the most *unjust* and *unscriptural* description.

"I conclude you have not seen my signature to the declaration of the members of the different committees of the connexion; you would not otherwise have supposed me favourable to your objects, without believing my conduct to be inconsistent with sincerity and truth, and unworthy of a professor of religion.—I am, &c.

WILLIAM CARNE."

The unblushing impudence of the Association which appears in this document, needs no comment of ours.—ED.

* Some there are who, refusing credit to the testimonies of our venerated founder, his able coadjutors, or their successors in the connexion, will probably receive with deference the following opinion of Alexander Kilham, on the subject of a Theological Institution, who underwent the sentence of expulsion from the body, in 1796:—"We are of the same opinion with this district last year—that it would be very useful for many pious, promising young men, to be a few months under a proper master, to learn a little of the English Grammar, and to pronounce their words properly. If a small academy were appointed near Leeds, or in any populous part of the kingdom, they might supply a number of places, and regularly attend their studies. This would not hinder their piety, but make them abundantly more useful in the vineyard of Christ. We believe, many of our friends would cheerfully subscribe to defray the expense."—*Monitor*, vol. I., p. 305.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A correspondent directs our attention to the triple calling of the Association—duping, begging, and stealing. The poor people have been duped sure enough; for the oft-repeated promise of “no division” has ended in separate preaching, and a new sect; and the idea of escaping from rascally preachers, by accepting the ministrations of the Rev. Mr. Lamb, completes the delusion. Messrs. Cole and Hiles have announced, by public advertisement, that they will *thankfully* receive any sums of money on behalf of poor Dr. Warren, and the truth of their statement nobody can deny; for the members of the “grand central” had rather receive other people’s money than give their own, and they find going to law to be a much finer thing than paying the expenses. Although the Apostle’s advice and Mr. Hamilton’s text, “let him that stole steal no more,” would never disturb the mind of an honest man, yet it has completely unsettled the poor editor of the *Lantern*. He proposes, indeed, to tell a “plain tale,” and “put us down;” but acknowledges he “knows not how to begin;” and it is quite clear he knows not how to proceed, for his “tale” is grossly incorrect. On the whole, he admits that a robbery has taken place, and that restitution has been made, in part—though but in part; £18 8s 4d of stolen property has been returned, but the society’s book is still kept back. He “assures” us, they were not driven to this measure by the *Illuminator*; so it was, most likely, by the sheer conviction that the money was not theirs, and that keeping it, under such circumstances, was no very creditable thing. This is hopeful: “where there is shame, there may in time be virtue.” Yet there was not sufficient strength of principle to make them thoroughly honest, by sending book and all. This is alarming. So long as the culprit hesitates in his course of reform, he may relapse into his old habits. Lest that should be the case, we say again, “let him that stole steal no more.”

MORE “LOGIC IN A LANTERN.”—In one of the greatest efforts of genius which has ever yet appeared in our cotemporary, the writer begins by saying, “the *Illuminator* and the dram-shops;” and, after adducing the amazing fact, that some preachers take “a glass of punch,” he concludes by congratulating himself on having given us such a “blow on the scone” as must stop our mouths about the “gin-shops,” effectually and for ever. Allowing this writer his own facts and principles, his argument, so far as it has any bearing upon ourselves, just amounts to this: 1st—“Some preachers choose to take a glass of punch,” and, *therefore*, Mr. Wesley was mistaken when he said that such as sell ardent spirits to “any that will buy them,” are “poisoners general;” and we forfeit our “consistency” by quoting his words. 2dly—“Preachers have admitted spirit dealers into society,” and, *therefore*, “let the dram-seller become a member of the Association—let him lift up his voice in favour of a reform of abuses;” it is a violation of all “decency” in us to tell him to—begin at home. 3dly—“Preachers have promoted dram-sellers to” offices of trust and responsibility;” and, *therefore*, when one of these, abusing the kindness shown him, begins to lift up himself, and must needs give a new code of laws to the connexion, it is utterly wrong in us to oppose the imprudent attempt. 4thly—“A preacher silenced two persons who wished to introduce the subject of spirit drinking into the quarterly meeting;” and, *therefore*, when a ginseller affects a conscientious objection to the connexion between church and state, and at the same time is moving heaven and earth in order to keep up a “connexion” between his own shop and the “leaders’ meeting,” we are not at liberty to say that all this is “ineffable hypocrisy.” 5thly—“If Methodist preachers will drink spirits, *there must be* persons to sell them.” So then, it seems, we must add avarice and cupidity to all the other bad qualities of the members of the Association; for when they are asked to *give* any thing, why then the corrupt preachers are to be reduced to goodness by “stopping the supplies;” and so long as these reformers have a chance of *gaining* a farthing by the infirmities of their pastors, all their wishes, as a matter of course, *must be* gratified. Surely the men who can utter such demonstrations as these, must be “singularly fitted for great actions.”—We are next told a wonderful story about some spirit dealers in the Isle of Man, who were so disgusted with the *Illuminator* that they had “nearly quitted” the society, but second thoughts induced them to remain; for although it was a hard case to be brayed in a mortar, by the terrible words of Mr. Wesley, yet they well knew it was a far worse thing to join the Association, and so proceeded no further. The writer adds, “these remarks may seem severe;” and no doubt he will feel them to be so, for they are a great libel on his understanding.

The query proposed by an “English Methodist” has been advanced in such a spirit of candour and Christian sincerity, which at once reflects credit on the querist, and shall, without fail, receive due attention; our limits, in this number, do not allow such an answer as we feel disposed to give. In our next, we hope to have an opportunity of considering the question at large.

Communications have been received from “Alpha,”—“G. M.”—“Philagathos,”—“James Wild,”—“Omega,”—“Somebody,”—“J. W.”—“H.”—“A hearer of the Wesleyans in the Loughbro’ circuit,”—“Mentor,”—“Epsilon,”—“Sigma,”—“Delta,”—and “Observer.”

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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THE SECTARIAN SPIRIT OF THE ASSOCIATION AND DELEGATES,
IN CONTRAST WITH THE CATHOLIC SPIRIT OF WESLEYAN
METHODISM.

THE utter incapacity of the men who have placed themselves at the head of the anti-Wesleyan movement, to legislate in its affairs, becomes more apparent by every attempt they make. The narrowness of their views, the scantiness of their information, the party spleen and excitement under which they labour, and above all—the sectarian principles they have adopted, ill qualify them to intermeddle in the government of a connexion so complex, extended, and truly *unique*, in its structure, as the Methodist. They possess no plummet to gauge its depths of wisdom—no eye to scan its multifarious interests—no taste and genius in accordance with its gigantic and sublime objects—and no spirit in unison with its anti-sectarian and truly catholic form of government and communion.

From the earliest days of Mr. Wesley to the present period, it has been the anxious and continued effort of the body to preserve to itself a noble catholicism of spirit and operation. Its rules, doctrinal sentiments, plans of operation, and principles of communion have not been fixed on the narrow foundation of any one of the sects of Christendom. The simple, but grand designs of the kingdom of Christ have, it is hoped, been constantly kept in mind, and not the pre-eminence and distinction of a sect. Extreme views on different forms of church polity by their fond but narrow-minded advocates, have tended to stultify the exertions, and limit the boundaries of the church of Christ. In all periods of her history, the Christian religion has been doomed to suffer from this infirmity—littleness of the human mind. It appears to be too great—in its principles, promises, scope of exertions, designs of triumph, and field of predicted existence, for the grasp of most minds; they have screwed it down to the narrowness of a sect, and called that Christianity! Mr. Wesley was pressed and goaded to do the same, by the bigots of his

day, but with steadfastness of purpose he resisted to the day of his death. In his "Thoughts upon a late Phenomenon," a tract written in 1788, he glories in the liberality of Methodism:—

"One circumstance more is quite peculiar to the people called Methodists; that is, the terms upon which any person may be admitted into their society. They do not impose, in order to their admission, any opinions whatever. Let them hold particular or general redemption, absolute or conditional decrees; let them be churchmen or dissenters, presbyterians or independents, it is no obstacle. Let them choose one mode of baptism or another, it is no bar to their admission. The presbyterian may be a presbyterian still; the independent or anabaptist use his own mode of worship. So may the quaker; and none will contend with him about it. They think, and let think. One condition, and one only, is required—a real desire to save their soul. Where this is, it is enough: They desire no more: They lay stress upon nothing else: They ask only—'Is thy heart herein as my heart? If it be, give me thy hand.'

"Is there any other society in Great Britain or Ireland so remote from bigotry?—that is, so truly of a catholic spirit?—so ready to admit all serious persons, without distinction? Where, then, is there such another in Europe?—in the habitable world? I know none. Let any man show it me that can. Till then, let no one talk of the bigotry of the Methodists."

As late as 1820, the Conference echo the same sentiment, and declare they do not "*exist for sectarian purposes.*" Hence, men of all opinions on the subjects of church government, have always belonged to the Wesleyan societies. Amongst her wisest, most devoted, and useful disciples, have been found conscientious churchmen, who have considered it no compromise of their principles to unite in fellowship with a Methodist society—enjoy their rich provision of ordinances—and yet retain their episcopalian prepossessions. And, on the other hand, some of the brightest ornaments of Methodism have been professed dissenters in principle—and yet, within the pale of this communion, could meet the Church-Methodist in perfect concord and union of spirit. This agrees to the genius of Christianity, where "There is neither Jew nor Greek—there is neither bond nor free—there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ." Methodism has never yet assumed a distinctive form. She has adopted the truths and principles of the New Testament, and left herself at liberty to carry them out, without the restraints of either an episcopalian or an independent mode and channel of operation. The absurdity of supposing that the gospel is to be made to pour its blessings exclusively upon the world through the medium of one of these conduits, never belonged to our connexion. The basis of the church of Christ, in her creed, is co-extensive with the world—the persons embraced in the scheme of redemption, every soul of man—the truth of the gospel, like the light of heaven, is so peculiarly subtle and ethereal as to be suited to every variety of mind—and the ordinances of religion so simple and spiritual, as to lose none of their value and efficacy, whether administered beneath the shadow of an American forest, or of the stately dome of a majestic cathedral.

We trust this catholic spirit, and noble and expansive conception of the objects of Christianity will always distinguish the Wesleyan body.—Great inconvenience, we conceive, would arise out of placing the connexion on an exact and accurately defined platform. It would oblige the body to seek the extension of the kingdom of Christ, and the happiness and salvation of the world, on fixed economical rules. In this respect its power of action has hitherto been perfectly free, and the amount of good accomplished much greater than if trammelled by the encumbrance of any nicely balanced and methodically defined mode of saving souls. We

have no doubt but great numbers of persons, both in the establishment of the country and the dissenting bodies, have groaned beneath the pressure of their respective systems, when they have been called, by the Spirit of God and the exigencies of a dying world, to extend to them the blessed provisions of the gospel. The Wesleyans have never bound themselves to do good on an exclusive model. They hold themselves at liberty to approximate to the form of worship in the church, and use the liturgy and the organ—or to observe the more simple and naked service of the non-conformists; and in their exertions to extend the knowledge of the truth amongst the dark population of our own country, or the more needy tribes of foreign lands, to act as circumstances may require—keeping constantly to the all-important principle of teaching the true gospel. To bind the connexion down to any absolutely settled plan would greatly abridge this freedom, and prevent the good which is accomplished by its right direction.

Another reason against a sectarian alteration of the discipline of the connexion is, the difficulties it must throw in the way of a prompt and ready obedience to the calls of God, and the openings of divine providence, which it has hitherto been enabled to attend to. It seems to have been a settled principle with Mr. Wesley, in all his arrangements, never to go beyond the call of present duty and obligation, and to hold himself in readiness for the next. His legislation is founded on this rule. Hence, law of Methodism is perfectly simple, like the primary principles of truth and justice which laid the basis of the British constitution. On a careful examination of the writings of our great founder, and the minutes of Conference, it will be found that every new measure had its origin in some passing necessity of the moment, and was never prospective, except in that particular case. By this means the connexion was never in circumstances to refuse obedience to the calls of providence. No previously adopted scheme closed the door of access into any new field of usefulness. We are persuaded, the present race of Methodists will be wise in imitating their ancestors in this respect. The Conference will be urged, both by friends and foes, to alter and enlarge its code of laws; let them, however, be extremely moderate and cautious in this respect. If, when they assemble, they find a case of necessity exists to explain, amplify, or legislate, let them guard against going beyond the necessity of the case. The world is in progress—so is the church; and the safest and most advantageous position for Methodism is that which she has hitherto occupied, viz.—an unfettered state of freedom which enabled her, at the call of God, to rush into every open door.—The case of the introduction of the American Methodist Episcopal Church into that country, finely illustrates our meaning. Other changes in the state of the nations, no doubt, will arrive; and it is most desirable that the Methodist connexion should be in circumstances to avail itself of all such changes, and introduce religion in such way as the case may require. If, however, her plans of operation are narrowed to some little, limited, sectarian scheme, how can she be prepared to operate on the grand and sublime movements of the divine providence, when that providence shall carry into effect the ultimate and universal designs of redeeming love. If the purposes of God are to be carried out by the church—which, no doubt, is the case—then many of the sects must greatly enlarge their creed and their scale of operation too, or they can have little to do in the work; and one of the most prominent effects of the

swell and force of truth and grace, to be expected in the latter day, is—the overthrow of many a fondly guarded sectarian fence, and the enlargement of the Christian church to an elevation with the mercy, love, and greatness of the design. We believe Methodism has fewer *littlenesses* of this sort than most of the other Christian parties; and in this day of large expectation and exertion, it would grieve us beyond measure to see her throw obstacles in the way of her own future enlargement, usefulness, and glory.

Besides the reasons already adduced against the minifying process and sectarian movements of the party now agitating the connexion, we may mention its opposition to the spirit of the body in general. The Association is composed only of a *small part* of one class and section in the connexion. We have already stated that Methodism is so constructed as to admit of persons holding opposite opinions on the subject of church polity. The probability is, that many members of society are dissenters in opinion on the question of church government; but they are content to leave their brethren in the enjoyment of the same liberty they so fully possess themselves. But charged with a narrow, bigoted, and democratic zeal, a small portion of the *dissenters* of the connexion, are seeking to disorganize the whole frame-work of the system, and reduce it to the dimensions of their own *ONE* idea. The independence of circuits is the doctrine of the most moderate of the party. We should like to know how long the independence of circuits would last. It would, we apprehend, soon be followed by the independence of societies and congregations, and the Wesleyan connexion would, destitute of a common government, soon split into a thousand fragments.

We object to this, not merely on account of the principles involved, but also on account of its injustice to that numerous portion of the community, who have united with us because of the connexional, liberal, and enlarged form of the body. What right have the democrats—the least party, in intelligence, in numbers, in pious respectability and standing, to require the rest of the body to yield to their sectarian notions? If we are not much mistaken, great numbers of the noble spirits of the connexion spurn this attempt to lower them from the eminence they hold, to the swampy bogs of a religious democracy, with feelings of unmingled indignation. These gentlemen of the Association assume a tone of importance and dictation, as if they were the only persons interested in the questions in dispute, and as if they possessed the unquestionable right to give law to the whole connexion. We take leave to remind them, that there are other parties who, to say the least, are entitled to a hearing; and whose principles, whose numbers, whose wisdom, whose rank and influence, whose devoted attachment to Methodism *as it is*, will throw up an effectual barrier against their rude assaults.

Our reformers profess liberal principles in religion, and yet they would so re-construct the Wesleyan polity as only to allow of persons holding one class of opinions being united to the societies. This is *their* liberality—it is not *our's*—it is not that of the *bigoted* Conference!—it is not that of truly enlightened Methodists in any part of the world. The perfection of Christian liberality with these gentlemen of the Association is, to frame a system of government of such pure and exclusively sectarian *independency*, as effectually to shut out all persons who cannot bring their minds to believe in the divine right of this form of religion. That truly Catholic model which we see was left by Mr. Wesley, and has hitherto been adhered to by his followers, it is now proposed to exchange for a bigoted fellowship founded on the lowest notions of religious democracy. They would exclude all who cannot conform to their notions; or join in a union having, as its basis, principles which, to say the least, thousands must doubt to be of divine authority. We object, on conscientious grounds, most fully, against so narrowing the Wesleyan communion, as to make it an exclusive church—a close-borough for religious and national radicalism. Persons holding our sentiments, have been denominated *Tories*. *Tories* though we be, we beg to remind those who use this term to designate us as persons of narrow views and oppressive practice—that *our* principles will not allow us to consent that any portions of mankind

shall be excluded from the Methodist societies for holding non-essential opinions on questions of church government. To which party the reproach belongs, let all impartial men judge: the Conference, who are desirous that Methodism shall exist on so broad a foundation as to admit persons holding different sentiments at the same time living peaceably in the societies; or, those who are anxious to throw the connexion into a purely dissenting form, and, by this means, exclude all persons holding opinions of an opposite nature. It is beyond our capacity to perceive any *real* difference betwixt this kind of bigotry and the exclusive spirit of church *Toryism* of the highest grade. So to narrow the conditions of communion in a church; or so to construct its economy as only to admit Christians holding one class of opinions, is the height of sectarian bigotry, and the charge is as applicable to these gentlemen of *liberal* principles as it is to the most ranting claimant of episcopal supremacy. That reforming fanatics do not perceive this, we fully believe; for it is in the nature of party zeal to blind the understanding. While they are taking measures, which, if carried, would most assuredly so alter the tenure of the Christian ministry as to make it obligatory on vast numbers of the present race of preachers to resign their office, and seek to exercise it in some other line; and also, to exclude from the body a large portion of its most pious, aged, and influential members, they call their proceedings *liberal*! Yes, it is the liberality of an ambitious party, who, to attain their own aggrandisement, push themselves into public notice and render their notions paramount, would trample all other rights and immunities in the dust. We happen to know too much of the spirit of the faction, to have much respect for what they call principle. Principle with them is mere party ambition, and to gratify that, they would have no objection to sacrifice the most liberal ecclesiastical polity in the world. But we detect bigotry of another kind in the spirit and proceedings of the Association. Besides narrowing the foundations of the connexion to the dimensions of pure dissent, they would also break up the magnificent communion existing in Methodism. Their *beau ideal* of a Christian church is, a little knot of Christians united in one society; or, at most, the independent fellowship of the societies of a single circuit, meeting together to wrangle and debate respecting matters connected with their own puny being and interests. Every thing with them is to be final. They propose never to go beyond the threshold of their nicely defined fellowship, and no interference is to be allowed from without. Really we beg pardon, for in writing the word "*interference*" we are reminded that the first—the primary principle—adopted by the delegates, is the right of interference on the part of all the members of society with the operations of the whole system. We are, consequently, wrong in one part of the above statement; they do propose to go beyond their own little inclosure, to interfere with the whole measures of the connexion—but mark, they tell us at the same time that no foreign interference shall be allowed in respect of themselves—their own measures are all to be final. They are to discuss freely, and act independently, as in their wisdom they may see fit, in every thing connected with Methodism in any part of the world; but no Conference, district meeting, or any other power is to interfere with them. This is their reciprocity—their free trade—in religion.

It is obvious, if these extremes are acted upon, they must dissolve our bond of union, and reduce the Methodist societies to independent churches. To say the least, this would be to break up the *greatest religious fellowship existing in the world*; or, that perhaps ever did exist. But this is a trifle compared with the gratification of party passion, and that the Association is prepared to go this length, in their bigoted zeal, we have ample proof. What was their boasted heroism in stopping the supplies, but a separation of themselves from the communion of the body, and an attempt to break it up, by throwing every separate society on its own resources. Surely, after this charitable and Christian act, these "*long-suffering*" gentlemen will not say they intended to continue their *spiritual* communion with the body!—that they continued to love the brethren—to be one in spirit with them—to pray for the progress of the Word of God, and the enlargement of the kingdom of our Lord! Such, however, is this "*deceivableness of unrighteousness*," that we believe the great majority of those who had been guilty of this barbarous atrocity, continued to dream that they really belonged to the communion *in spirit*, and offered up the mockery of prayer for the prosperity of a connexion, whose fellowship they were endeavouring to sever in the most iniquitous manner. Such a mixture of folly, impiety, and bigotry, we believe, has rarely been witnessed in the annals of religious faction. But we venture to tell these fond friends of *little things*, that, though they have not the wisdom to discern the advantages of a great communion, or hearts large enough to respond to the joys and sorrows—the happiness and interests—the growth and enlargement of such a body as our's—others have. The tens of thousands of our Israel are not prepared to prefer the

limited fellowship, charity, and glory of an isolated society, however independent it may be, to that great Catholic communion which they now enjoy. Whilst the bigots confine themselves in their shell, or draw their puny spirits through the slime of faction, the true Methodist identifies himself with every thing wise, good, and great, in every part of the church and of the world.

THE METHODIST NEW CONNEXION AND ITS GOVERNMENT.

(Concluded from our last.)

As men advance in life, they ought to increase in knowledge. Dr. Warren is growing old, and he has recently been progressing in *wisdom* with a sort of railway rapidity. When we first read his published "speech and remarks," we saw that he was so unsettled and excited in the state of his mind, that he would, ere long, be driven and tossed with the winds and waves of radicalism, and would, during the course of the tempest, persuade himself that he had made some valuable discoveries in political science, for which his popularity would be vastly augmented among a numerous class of men who are "given to change." After itinerating in the Methodist body between thirty and forty years, he begins to see the folly of Mr. Wesley in composing the Conference exclusively of preachers; and that unless lay delegation be henceforth forced into that assembly, though it might even "*destroy Methodism*," it will not "*quadrate* with the New Testament."

On this question we are at issue with the Doctor, his party, and the New Connexion. These unite in saying, that the Conference, as constituted by Mr. Wesley, is unscriptural. We deny the charge, and call for the evidence. It is said to be contained in Acts xv., which we have carefully perused. That chapter informs us of the first council held in the Christian church to determine a point purely *doctrinal*, whether it was necessary for the disciples to be circumcised in order to be saved. The council was composed simply of "the Apostles and Elders," who "considered the matter."—We admit that it was "an open Conference," for a "multitude" of believers were present. And for what purpose? To speak and vote on the doctrine in dispute?—No! The speaking was confined to the Apostles and Elders, and the "matter" was *not determined by votes*." The whole business was transacted under special divine guidance. The Eternal Spirit, speaking by the Apostles, authoritatively decided, that the rite of circumcision is not binding upon Christians, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. Hence their decision is thus emphatically expressed: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." The people listened attentively to the debate, offered their prayers to God for his direction, were satisfied with the sentence pronounced by James, who seems to have been president of the council, and concurred in the appointment of Judas and Silas, as a deputation to accompany Paul and Barnabas unto Antioch, to deliver unto the church in that city "the decrees for to keep that were ordained of the Apostles and Elders which were at Jerusalem." In this whole transaction we can no more see the plan of lay delegation, than we can discover London in the moon. The Conference of the New Connexion in its *formation*, its *object*, its *mode* of proceeding is essentially different from the council held in the primitive church. If there be no other text from "the sacred page" to prove that the venerable Wesley fell into a serious error when he legally excluded delegates from Conference, the charge preferred against him is without foundation. He certainly understood the scriptures as well as any, and far better than most, of his accusers!

Lay delegation is demanded for the sake of *ulterior* measures. "Let that be conceded, and every thing else will follow to place Methodism on a scriptural basis." Our readers will give us credit for saying, we hold no sympathy with this statement. We believe "every thing else would follow to place Methodism on an" *unscriptural* "basis." Having proved this position to some extent in a former article, we proceed to specify another measure at variance with the New Testament, that will inevitably grow out of lay delegation.

The ministers of Christ will have no control over the appointment or removal of officers in the body.

The evidence of this declaration is abundantly furnished by the statute book of the New connexion. The divine and responsible office of the ministry was, so to speak, "put into commission;" and lay delegation confers it upon men divested of its scrip-

tural rights. Itinerant preachers, even when honoured with the title of superintendents, are powerless as to the appointment of leaders, stewards, and local preachers.—Let the following rules be read, and our remark will be justified. “When a leader is wanted, the circumstance shall be intimated to the leaders’ meeting, which shall proceed to nominate a proper person to fill the office: this nomination shall be communicated first to the class, and then to the person proposed, for their concurrence. If either dissent, a second nomination shall take place; and so on, till both parties are satisfied. The society-stewards shall be nominated by a leaders’ meeting, and appointed at a society meeting. It shall be the province of the quarterly meeting to take out exhorters as local preachers on trial, to pass them from stage to stage upon their trial, and finally to admit them into full connexion.”*

Ministers, too, under the dominion of lay delegation, are without authority to remove office-bearers; however richly such a proceeding may be merited by un-Christian conduct. The subjoined laws will confirm our testimony:—“It shall be the duty of a leaders’ meeting to remove a leader from office. The leaders’ meeting shall represent the case of unworthy stewards to the society, which shall remove them. The quarterly meeting shall have power to remove circuit stewards from office. The quarterly meeting, or special circuit meeting, shall be competent to inquire into any charge brought against a circuit preacher, in regard to immoral conduct—preaching false doctrine—or gross neglect of duty: it shall hear the charge and evidence in the presence of the preacher who is accused, and also his defence against the same; according to which it shall determine, in the fear of God; and, if necessary, it shall suspend the said preacher until the ensuing Conference.

The principal objection which we have to the above rules is, that they are *opposed to the “oracles of God.”* The ministry is of divine institution, and it is one of the rights of its occupants to appoint the various classes of officers, that the exigencies of the church may require. Timothy had power to ordain ministers: “The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same *commit thou* to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” As this youthful evangelist could authorize men to fill the highest office in the church of Christ, he had, doubtless, a right to appoint suitable persons to sustain offices of less consequence. Individuals, it is well known, were fixed in official situations, by imposition of hands; and this investing rite was performed by those who were commanded to “make full proof of their ministry.” On Timothy devolved this duty; and the inspired Apostle gave him directions how to discharge it in the most useful and acceptable manner. Not only did he describe the characters of the persons he was to appoint to offices, but enjoined upon him the greatest caution, lest, in the precipitant exercise of his ministerial authority, he should become a partner in the guilt and mischief of unworthy and unholy men in “high places.” St. Paul’s commandment deserves to be well considered—“Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins.” Mr. Wesley’s note is justly expressive of its import: “Appoint no man to church offices without full trial and examination. Else, thou wilt be accessory to, and accountable for, his misbehaviour in office.”

Titus also had equal power in the church with Timothy. St. Paul said to him—“For this cause left I thee in Crete: that *thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.*”

To disprove the position which Paul’s epistles to Timothy and Titus fully support, we are aware that passages are selected from other parts of the New Testament, especially from the Acts of the Apostles; and these it is our duty to examine. The transaction which is written in Acts i., it is said, sufficiently proves the right of the laity to elect persons to the office of the ministry. We are compelled to deny this proposition, because the appointment of Matthias “to take part of this ministry and Apostleship” was decided by “*lot*,” and not by the suffrages of the people. As it was a matter of great moment, it was not determined by any ordinary method, but “committed to the divine decision.” Matthias, therefore, “was numbered with the eleven Apostles,” by “the Lord himself,” and not by the hundred and twenty disciples.

Again. The manner in which deacons were elected in Acts vi. 1–7, is affirmed to demonstrate the right of the laity to appoint men to offices in the church. Persons who thus interpret are chargeable with not having fully investigated the text on which

* The quarterly meeting has also power to control the preachers in their ministrations. “It shall, from time to time, fix upon the *persons* who shall draw up the preachers’ plan, and also upon the *mode* of drawing it up; it shall also fix the *time* that the preachers are to remain with each society.” To this we may add the substance of another regulation. The quarterly meeting has power to fix what amount of money shall be *deducted* from a preacher’s board—which is *fourteen shillings* per week—for the time that he is bound to remain from home with the societies! The law of Conference secures him only nine and fourpence!

they have built their principle, or they would have discovered that "the multitude of disciples" had, on the occasion, no power save what the Apostles gave them, and it was only a privilege to *nominate* seven men to "serve tables," *reserving* to themselves the right of appointment, and consequently the right of rejecting any candidate whose qualifications were not according to the standard of Christian excellence which they had erected. We wish them to be heard on these several points. "Brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom *we* may appoint over this business." The church gladly obeyed those that had the rule over them, and the chosen individuals were "set before the Apostles," from whom they received their appointment to office; for when "they had prayed, they laid their hands on them." The principle which we think arises out of the above facts is, that officers are to be appointed in conjunction with the laity in such a manner, as will leave a controlling power in the hands of Christ's ambassadors.

As Christian pastors have the prerogative to appoint, they have likewise the right to remove official characters, whenever such a measure is requisite. The Apostle, in his epistle to Titus, speaks of certain teachers who, by their corrupt doctrine, "subverted whole houses," and "whose mouths *must be stopped*." Now, in what manner was Titus to silence these injurious preachers? His spiritual father required him, after due admonition, to "*reject*" them. Diotrephes was an ambitious, malignant, slanderous, and tyrannical officer in the church, concerning whom St. John said, in his epistle to Gaius—"If I come, I will *remember* his deeds." And what, we would ask, is the meaning of this menace? Dr. A. Clarke thus paraphrases it—"I will show him the authority which, as an Apostle of Jesus Christ, I possess." This power he would assuredly manifest in his excommunication. If it be said that ordinary ministers have not the right to remove fallen and injurious officers, what will be the inference? That the angel of the church of Thyatira was improperly censured by the Son of God, for *permitting* Jezebel—who corrupted the true religion by teaching and seducing some of His servants "to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols,"—to remain in its communion. Had it not been the minister's duty to "cut off" this godless and mischievous woman, he was unkindly—yea, *unjustly* admonished!

These powers of appointing and removing office-bearers, are *usurped* in the New connexion. Preachers in that community are "stripped" of their scriptural privileges. They are not in a ministry as God has founded it, but *as lay delegation has fashioned it*. All power in the executive administration, as the laws we have adduced abundantly testify, is in the hands of the secular rulers. Such a system we pronounce to be unscriptural and tyrannical; and we, therefore, hate it, and shall resist its admission into the Wesleyan connexion with all our might.

We have another objection to the laws of the New Connexion as laid before our readers. *They are an outrage upon the distinguishing principle of its own polity—the equality of rights*. There is something, if we may use the expression, of an American style of equality, in the laws on which we have animadverted. The fundamental principle of American liberty is—that all men are equal; and are, therefore, to have common rights and advantages; but some of the laws of the United States undeniably prove, that their elementary axiom means all *white* men are on common ground, and that millions of *black* men are on no ground at all; and, consequently, they are to be held as chattels; and treated as brutes. Such a melancholy state of things induces us to exclaim—"Oh, liberty! what deeds are committed in thy name!" We do not wish to insinuate that the class of officers who wear *black* raiment in the New Connexion are enslaved as the Negroes in America. No. We mean to say that the leading principle of the polity of that body is, that as the preachers and people are brethren, so there is to be an equal distribution of power in the government of the church; but that laws have been made in which the balance theory as a bale of worthless goods, is thrown overboard; for the laity have all the authority, and their ministers none. Preachers may make speeches and propose a question for decision; but the *votes* which determine admissions and expulsions of members, appointments and removals of officers, are in the hands of the people!

What makes the matter still worse is, that the evil, except in rare cases, is *remediless*. If the preachers should propose in Conference to reform the laws that relate to office men, it would be like their proposal of 1822, to improve the rules which refer to members; though they might obtain a favourable hearing *there*, the reform bill must be sent to the parties who have usurped all power for *their* consideration, and the result would certainly be, as in the other instance, a rejection of the measure! Men may tell us in letters and speeches, that in such a system there is an equality of rights; but the laws convince us that we must reject their testimony. The rare cases in which the incubus is somewhat remedied, are those of highly gifted preachers. A fear of dis-

gusting a talented man by making him in all meetings, simply a "speaking brother," and a suspicion, if not a persuasion, that golden bribes are presented to his gaze to attract him into another community, influence the lords temporal to honour him with a share of their authority.* But the mediocrity men, and these are the many, are left without remedy; and their only course is, either to submit quietly to the yoke, or to resign their ministry, as *three* respectable preachers did at the Conference of 1830.

Is such the operation of the lay delegation plan? Does it rob preachers of their official privileges, and release people from the necessity of yielding them any obedience? Does it drive excellent men from the ministry? With this character it never can find favour in the eyes of the great body of the Wesleyan Methodists. No! Thanks to the Rev. J. Wesley—thanks to the fathers and brethren of 1797—and, above all, thanks to the great Head of the Church, that the old connexion has never been degraded, nor enslaved, nor narrowed, with the tyranny of lay delegation. The ministry—as Jesus Christ established it, and not as republican zealots would mould it—is, and shall be, preserved in Methodism; and while we are thus faithful to Him, he will put increasing honour upon us: the benediction which Moses pronounced upon his people shall be fulfilled to our Israel:—"The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you, as he hath promised you."

EPSILON.

SKETCHES OF "THE GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION;" OR, "MEN SINGULARLY FITTED FOR GREAT ACTIONS."

To meet the numerous inquiries of those persons who are concerned to know something of certain individuals who have recently been figuring before the public, the following items of information are respectfully presented through the medium of the *Liverpool Illuminator*.

I.—"WILLIAM SMITH, Esq. of Reddish House," the Treasurer of the Association, is reputed to be a wealthy cotton-spinner and manufacturer, having a mill at Stockport and a warehouse in Manchester. As stated in his recent affidavit, in the Court of Chancery, he is a trustee of sundry chapels in Stockport and its neighbourhood, and for many years he *was* a member of the Wesleyan Methodist society. We have never heard of his possessing any very great talents or any splendid accomplishments, though for some years he affected to be the Mæcenas of the late venerable and learned Dr. A. Clarke. In what degree he has acquired a character for piety, is a question which must be left to be settled by the Stockport society, and by the preachers who have lately travelled in that circuit. One thing, however, is certain—that for some years past he has been uneasy. Whether this uneasiness has arisen from the circumstance of other persons in that circuit having outstripped him in public estimation and in general influence, or from some other cause—though we are not without the means of judging—we shall not undertake positively to decide. We simply state the fact, that he has been uneasy; and add—what he has himself made too notorious to be concealed—that, in a fit of desperation, he has committed himself, headlong and at all hazards, to a party most oddly denominated by themselves, "the *liberal* party;" and is at this moment competitor with Dr. Warren in his *wind-mill* expedition.

In the recent movements of Dr. W. and his *clique*, Mr. S. has seemed to think a favourable opportunity was offered for the gratification of his humour, and he has not failed to take advantage of it. One of his first exploits was to address an impertinent and stupid letter to the Rev. John Anderson—charging him with having held out an intimation of exclusive dealing, to the injury of a young tradesman who had been selling Dr. Warren's pamphlet, and threatening to expose him thereupon. The charge against Mr. Anderson was false; but no matter—it was assumed that there was something like a ground for it; or, as the quaint old bard of Manchester would say, if Mr. Anderson had not thrown up "three black crows," he had, in the judgment of Mr. S., thrown up something "as black, sir, as a crow;" and, for the purpose of serving the Warrenite or anti-Wesleyan party, it was convenient to hold up the character of Mr. Anderson to public reprobation. Mr. S. proceeded, therefore, most magnanimously, to publish the threatened exposure in the Manchester newspapers; and all this, forsooth, under the pretext that the tradesman in question had been placed under *his* (Mr. S.'s)

* We have heard it repeatedly declared that one of the preachers of the New connexion has had an offer of £500 to transfer his services to the Wesleyan body. And this stuff has been credited!

patronage and guardianship by the "uncle,"* to whose business he had recently succeeded! It is also ascertained, that, on the earlier stages of Dr. W.'s procedure, and whilst the plot was undergoing the process of being *hatched*, the warehouse of Mr. S. was occasionally the cabinet, or *nest*, in which himself and other privy counsellors assembled, as a place convenient for *incubation*; and beyond all doubt, the walls thereof, if they had only the faculty of being as communicative as their master, could tell of many things that would *illuminate* the subsequent proceedings, not having for their object the purity and order of the Wesleyan Methodist connexion. In addition to his *secret* co-operation, in the way just mentioned, and in other ways which it is needless to refer to, Mr. S. has thought it worth his while to grace the Doctor's *public* exhibitions with his presence; and to him belongs the honour of having presided at the celebrated meeting, at which the "*Grand Central Association*" was established. For his conduct on that occasion, he was duly summoned to a trial before a meeting of leaders and trustees, at Stockport. But, instead of appearing to answer to the charges of which he had received notice, he chose—in conformity with his own elevated notions of what is the rule of Wesleyan Methodism and of the New Testament—to refer the accuser to his attorney-at-law! Of course, his conduct in this instance was regarded as a voluntary withdrawal of himself from the Wesleyan Methodist society; and, for any thing that we have yet heard to the contrary, that withdrawal has given universal satisfaction.

II.—"WILLIAM WOOD, Esq., of Newton-street," the Secretary of the Association, has always heretofore been styled Mr. William Wood; but having "kissed hands" on his appointment to office, received on that memorable occasion the dignity of an *Esquire*, on the condition of his being ready, in his new character to aid in the defence of the fair fame of the "*Dulcinea*" now vulgarly yclept "*Methodistical Reform*;"—and he has done his best, though somewhat clumsily, to fulfil the task which has been laid upon him. For many years, he was a member and a leader of a small class in the Wesleyan Methodist society; but he has never lost the prejudices against *Wesleyan Methodism* which he inherited from his late father—well known in Bolton as a zealous *Kilhamite*; and on various occasions he has shown to the members of the New connexion "no small kindness." To this we have no manner of objection. He has an undoubted right to open his house for their accommodation as frequently as he thinks proper, and, if it suit his notions of consistency, he has our leave to give his countenance to the same party on their laying the foundation-stone of a new chapel, provided only that the individuals who officiate on the occasion mind their own business; or, if they *will* allude to our connexion, have the honesty to speak the *truth*.† But, if we thought as Mr. W., we would, without any hesitation, unite ourselves with the connexion to which he so cordially gives the right hand of fellowship; and not, as he does, profess a great anxiety to be connected with another people, whose ecclesiastical constitution and discipline were such as we were determined never to support or to approve. He is not generally regarded as having sufficient talent or influence to *originate* an agitation of any kind, but in cases where others have created any kind of stir, under the pretext of seeking reform or liberty, in church or state, he has usually been ready to fall in with them. As an instance of this, it may be mentioned, that during the memorable period when political radicalism was at its height in Manchester, he sympathised most warmly with those who clamoured on the subject of supposed abuses in the civil government of the country, and in the administration of Wesleyan Methodism.

For some years, he has been a zealous member and advocate of the Temperance society; and this circumstance might, for aught we know, be admitted to be in favour of his general character, were it not that in his case the virtue of *temperance*, having been somewhat too exclusively contemplated, seems to have wrought the effect of a *spiritual intoxication*; and to have actually swallowed up sundry other virtues, not less important, as elements of the Christian character and of well-ordered society, than temperance itself. Like certain other persons, he has chosen to make a kind of *household god* of this same temperance; and if any man will not set up an image *after the same pattern*, and worship it as he does, he anathematizes. On one occasion, it is said, he was so far transported by his zeal, as to call a fellow steward publicly to an account—though a member of the temperance society in common with himself—for the crime of having purchased wine, for sacramental purposes, from one whom he elegantly designated as "one of the greatest gin-spinners in Lancashire." We hope Mr. W. will re-

* We give the spelling as we found it in the original document.

† See the address of Mr. Ridgway, in laying the foundation-stone of a new chapel, in Peter-street, Manchester, on which occasion Mr. W. attended. See also a letter, in correction of Mr. R.'s mis-statements; both published in the *Manchester Times*.

member that there are other virtues besides temperance ; and, as doubtless he is possessed of and practises them, we may reasonably expect that he will deal truly and faithfully on the subject of the cardinal virtue of temperance, with a certain ringleader of the Association and vender of the fire-water ;* and that he will be careful to protest against his appearing henceforth as the public and accredited advocate of the " Grand Association," until he shall have been persuaded to exchange the gin-shop speculation, by which he has his wealth—however respectable and orderly the establishment may be—for some less questionable, though, it may be, less gainful undertaking.

Mr. W. has also been conspicuous as an advocate for the separation of church and state ; and, to the great astonishment and edification of his hearers, at a public meeting, held in Manchester some months ago, he endeavoured to support his notions on that subject by the writings of the Rev. John Wesley ! For this exploit, as we presume, he was honoured with an invitation to undertake a secretaryship, in furtherance of the object which he had so *powerfully* advocated. It is needless to add, that he was grievously dissatisfied with the proceedings of the Manchester district committee, and with the decision of the Conference, on the case of the Rev. J. R. Stephens.

In short, unless his own friends have strangely belied him, he was, about the time of the late Conference so thoroughly dissatisfied with the existing system of Wesleyan Methodism, as to be upon the point of quitting it altogether. But the out-breaking occasioned by Dr. W. was to his expiring zeal and love, " life from the dead ;" and, by a strange resuscitation, he became all at once (professedly) ready to sacrifice time, property, &c. in support of the system which just before he was ready to abjure. He was, therefore, judged a proper person to be associated with Dr. W. as one of his cabinet-council, and, at the *smuggled* meeting held in Oldham-street, on the 20th of Oct. 1834, he had the honour of introducing the " three propositions," which were immediately afterwards circulated through the country, as the oracles of peace and wisdom ; but which have long since been exploded to atoms by the tumultuous and misguided fire of the " demigods and heroes" from whose authority they emanated. From the absurdity and inconsistency embodied in those " propositions" it might have been supposed that some such wit as Mr. W. was the author of them ; but it is now ascertained that they were the composition of the *learned* Doctor himself, though not in *his own hand-writing*.

In the luminous and eloquent speech in which Mr. W. is reported to have introduced those propositions, he ventured to assert—pretending withal that he had adequate authority for the assertion—" that *hundreds* of the *preachers* would thank that meeting for those propositions, and that the Theological Institution was intended to shape all the junior preachers into *Tories*, as to their sentiments upon political subjects ;" but, on being requested to state on *what* authority these assertions had been made, he very prudently declined to give it.

We greatly wonder that such a man should have been chosen to act as secretary in affairs so cumbrous and complicated as those connected with the working of this " Grand Association." But there has been a fatality in all their movements, and there has manifestly been a Power above them, by which their counsel has been " turned into foolishness." We have no exception to make against the abilities of Mr. W. as a superintendent of a Sunday school, or as the leader of a small class of young persons selected from the Sunday school ; but the idea of *his* undertaking (as his official designation would appear to intimate), a varied and extensive correspondence on subjects of ecclesiastical and legislative policy, is, to our thinking, ludicrous in the extreme. We happen to have seen some of his own written compositions, and we judge accordingly. The only way in which we can account for the selection which has placed him in a post so difficult and important is, that in the first instance, names *apparently respectable* were judged absolutely necessary to give weight and currency to the principles of the Association, and at the time there was no other name at hand to which the dangling appendage of an " Esquire" could be so conveniently added. We were about to allude to certain letters written by Mr. W. to the Rev. J. Crowther ; but we defer doing so until another opportunity.—(*To be continued in our next.*)

* " I was at B. last week ; I was told that D. R., in the middle of the Hull meeting, gave out, with great apparent solemnity—' Jesus, confirm my heart's desire, To work,' &c. &c. I declare it made my blood creep cold in my veins, that ever *such* words should be breathed from *such* a heart, at *such* a time, and in *such* a place ! O, if these favourite lines of John Wesley had been heard by him in such circumstances, I cannot describe the feelings of abhorrence, disgust, and grief which would have agitated his whole soul, when they were polluted with the lips which sung them that evening. R. and G. were lately at Leeds preaching for the *non cons.* Ah, dear sir, what a state must that young man's mind be in, who can descend from the highest state on earth—that is, an ambassador for Christ—and grovel in the ware-house of a gin-seller ; and, instead of presenting to the lips of his fellow-creatures the 'cup of salvation,' he offers and sells them a bottle of fire-waters !" —*Correspondence.*

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—I have been much amused at the anxiety of the editors of that increasingly contemptible publication the *Lantern*, to enlist the late learned and venerable Dr. Adam Clarke, amongst those who favour the designs of the illegal combination. These men *are reckoning without their host*. The conduct of Dr. Clarke, during the long period of his ministerial career, gives the lie to such base and unfounded allegations. Agitators, like those who compose the “Grand Central Association,” were held by him in perfect abhorrence and contempt. The language which he used to designate their principles and conduct was invariably strong and impressive; under which, had he been alive, these associates would have quivered and dispersed: for, with the exception of a few, who, by a constant succession of duplicity, slander, and misrepresentation, have been wheedled into this unhallowed confederacy, these associates are men, who, on account of their character and profession, have no hope of acquiring distinction in the Wesleyan body, but by anarchy, agitation, and revolution. In every age of the church such have been the loudest and most boisterous declaimers against supposed corruption, and wrong, and the patriotism they profess, is that which our sturdy moralist, Dr. Johnson, most truly characterised as “the last refuge of a scoundrel.”

Until very lately we had many such *patriots* connected with the Methodist society in Liverpool: individuals who were well convinced that no change, be it ever so disastrous, could possibly render their situation more abject and worthless; they are, therefore, constantly in the van of the destructives—the noisiest spouters in all unauthorised and illegal meetings—the most reckless hacks of the wildest of all ecclesiastical radicals, and the meanest slaves of every open and secret foe of Methodism.

These men in the estimation of the learned Adam Clarke, were unworthy of friendly intercourse, and though some of them, taking advantage of that charity which “beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things,” for which the Doctor was proverbial, managed for several years to conceal the *cloven foot* of malignant hatred to the constituted authorities of Methodism; and, by fair speeches, to lead him, good natured and unsuspecting as he was, to believe, that they retained within their bosoms a healthy and sound Methodistical heart, Dr. Clarke looked upon these as the very *scabies* of the society—the incurable portion of the Methodist body, and uniformly declared it to be the duty and interest of every pious and sincere man, to keep them at as great a distance as possible.

On a few points the worthy Doctor differed in sentiment from his brethren. This fact we are far from wishing to conceal. However, throughout the controversy alluded to, the learned divine acted the part of an *honourable* opponent, and both parties retired from the arena of polemical debate, with very high notions of each other's probity and candour. The shameless effrontery and trickism of the associates, which have frequently and very justly been exposed in the pages of the *Illuminator*, never seized upon a more undeserving and noble victim than Dr. Adam Clarke. Rudely to *gibbet* him before the public, as opposed to the general proceedings of the Conference and especially in the Leeds case, is, on the part of the Association as unmanly and dastardly, as it is culpable and wicked in the sight of Him who reads the heart. Of Mr. Wesley, and the constituted authorities of Methodism, Dr. Clarke ever spoke in terms of the highest respect and esteem. To Methodism, under God, he was indebted for his conversion, for the means and opportunities he enjoyed of mental culture, and for all the eminence which he subsequently attained. The preachers always regarded him as a father, and many of the private members of the society, who never heard or saw him, have been delighted and profited by the productions of his pen. In reference to the uprightness of his life—the depth of his piety—the efficiency of his preaching—and the range of his acquirements as a scholar, all of which were consecrated to the elucidation and right understanding of the sacred scriptures, unite to constitute him an honour to the Methodist connexion, and to human nature. I really feel, Mr. Editor, a kind of becoming pride glowing in my heart, when I consider that Adam Clarke arrived at Kingswood School with only *three halfpence* in his pocket; and yet, by unwearied diligence and active industry, he became one of the most distinguished scholars of his day, and lived and died a Methodist preacher! These associates, who have not hesitated to tear the venerable Pawson from his grave, and compel him to give evidence at which his holy soul would have shuddered, have not manifested any reluctance to proclaim far and wide, that Dr. Clarke was completely opposed to the

plan and design of a Theological Institution for the improvement of the junior preachers of the Wesleyan body. Several of the small friends of the measure, have been anxious to prove that the worthy Doctor, had been guilty of *Warrenizing*, that, lie, before his lamented decease, with our *dear* and infatuated Dr. Warren, repented his having sanctioned a design "in some sinful moment of expediency," which was fraught with so much mischief to the best interests of the connexion at large. Those who were honoured with the personal acquaintance of Dr. Clarke, will know full well how to treat such a dishonourable *quirk* as this. Some interested individual inserted a letter in that compound of base calumny and falsehood of the blackest kind, and which bears a lie in its very cognomen, the *CHRISTIAN Advocate*, professing to come from a branch of the family of the late Doctor, in which it is asserted that he was decidedly and conscientiously opposed to all such institutions. At this I confess I was at first startled, unable to believe that our venerated friend should act like the *dear* Doctor of Chancery notoriety, who wished to institute a monopoly of learning, and dreaded lest any should be "as larn'd as he." All my momentary agitation, however, became evanescent when I met with the following sentiments, uttered by Dr. Clarke and published by his authority, which I am justified in considering *genuine*, and far more authentic than any thing which may appear in the columns of that *mendacious* periodical, to which I have already too much alluded. When the character of a publication is wrecked, the testimony it occasionally volunteers is not worth a rush! The case is now simply the *un-Christian Advocate* versus Dr. Adam Clarke. The former declares that the Doctor was opposed to a Theological Institution. Dr. Clarke "being dead, yet speaketh," and he says—what? "We want some kind of seminary for educating such workmen for the vineyard of our God, as need not be ashamed."—"I introduced a conversation on the subject this morning; and the preachers were unanimously of opinion that some strong efforts should be made without delay, to get such a place established, either at Bristol or London, where young men who may be deemed fit for the work, may have, were it but twelve months' or even half a year's previous instruction in theology, in vital godliness, in practical religion, in English grammar, and the rudiments of general knowledge."—"Every circuit cries out, 'send us acceptable preachers.' How can we do this? We are obliged to take what offers."—"The time is coming and now is, when *illiterate piety* can do no more for the interests and permanency of the work of God, than *lettered irreligion* did formerly."—"Speak, O speak *speedily* to all your friends. Let us get a place organised without delay. Let us have something that we can lay *matured* before the Conference. God, I hope, is in the proposal." Such was the pious and nervous language of Dr. Clarke on this topic, and those who are wishful to convict him of *Warrenizing* are ignorant of his unblemished character, and uncompromising integrity.

I come now to refer to the conduct of Dr. Clarke in regard to the Leeds affair; and, notwithstanding the antipathy which he constantly exhibited to instrumental music, am I to bring myself to the degrading conclusion, that he sanctioned the outrageous conduct of those men who only constituted the organ the bush from behind which the emissaries of discord might shoot their *Parthian* arrows? Sir, from his soul did he abhor the proceedings of those agitators; and, during the whole of the six days' discussion, which took place on that memorable occasion, Dr. Clarke did not utter a single sentence of disapprobation of the measures adopted by the Conference. His righteous soul was grieved at the enormous wickedness of the Leeds malcontents, and not a word of dissent escaped his lips, when the thanks of the Conference, by an overwhelming majority, were presented to the special district meeting, and the preachers then stationed in that town. If the Doctor had thought that the Conference was "doing the Devil's work," and "doing that work as the Devil wished," would he—the honest, plain-spoken, straight-forward, sin-hating, and God-fearing Dr. Clarke—have sat a silent spectator of those iniquitous proceedings, and by his silence become a partaker with them in their guilt? You know he would not! The whole Methodist community would rise and indignantly utter—NO! That foul slander which re-acts upon the character of the pious Dr. Clarke, is worthy only of those pages in which I find it; it is a scurrilous libel on the fair fame of that venerable man, and an expression highly derogatory to his reputation as a gentleman and a Christian!

On this subject I have not yet finished. Dr. Clarke's acquiescence in the proceedings of the Conference on the Leeds business, was not of a *tacit* kind. In reference to the just and well-merited suspension of Matthew Johnson, about which such a mighty fuss was made, the Doctor declared it as his judgment, that Mr. Grindrod had acted in perfect agreement with the law in passing sentence upon Mr. Johnson, adding, "THAT AS MR. J. HAD FULLY ADMITTED THE CHARGE BROUGHT AGAINST HIM, THERE WAS NOTHING TO GO TO THE JURY." After the whole case had been brought before

the Conference, Dr. Clarke accidentally met Mr. Grindrod contiguous to the platform, and with all that cordiality, friendship, and good humour for which he was distinguished, he placed his hands on the shoulders of Mr. G. and said, "Brother Grindrod, you shall not be censured, YOU HAVE DONE NOTHING WORTHY OF IT." The above I have from authority the most unquestionable, and which I am willing to produce when you, Mr. Editor, think fit to call for it. The expression which is reported to have been uttered by the Doctor at the house of his friend in Birmingham, is nothing less than a vile imputation on his sincerity and integrity, and which his friend, Mr. Hickling, has triumphantly refuted, to the entire satisfaction of every reasonable and intelligent man. The parallel which some have attempted to draw between the two Doctors, Clarke and Warren, is as fulsome as it is unjust. The difference between them is as great as that between the farthing candle, shedding a feeble glimmer in the recesses of a cellar, and the sun—which *illuminates* the evil and the good! ALEPH.

A SPEECH, "CUT AND DRIED," RESPECTFULLY TENDERED TO DR. WARREN!

Sir—As Dr. Warren is engaged in a tour through the "length and breadth of the land," for the purpose of "raising the wind," to pay the expenses of his late unsuccessful suits in Chancery, and as I perceive his tale is got quite trite and threadbare, I have supplied him with another; to which I invite his attention, and that of your readers.

"My dear good people—I beseech your courteous, candid, and pious attention, whilst I relate the cause or causes of my standing before you in the character of a *men-dicant*. A sketch of my early life has appeared in Blackwood's Magazine, from the romantic pen of my son, who *really is* a clever fellow, and the pride and oracle of his father. But as you are *all Methodists*—(or something else—*aside*)—I shall speak only of my Methodistical career. This I commenced with some piety, a little modesty, a sprinkling of common sense, and not a little singularity. I used to say at that time, 'I must be singular, or I should be lost!' Some persons say, that I retain nothing but my singularity; but they are poor mistaken men, and I pity them. I passed my junior years without observation—was scarcely known beyond the limits of my own circuit—and this was *much to my advantage*. I always *professed* to be a liberal; when, *therefore*, I became superintendent, I determined not to be ruled, but to be liberal in my own way, as all true liberals have been before me: consequently, when two large societies in the Sunderland circuit complained that I did not give them enough preaching, and presumptuously requested more, I took it in dudgeon, and piously and in the fear of God, determined they should have none at all. I put them at once off the plan; but my laudable design was frustrated by a neighbouring *tyrannical* superintendent, who, though with considerable inconvenience to himself, took them into his circuit. My colleagues used to say, and still affirm, as I am told, that with all my show of liberality, I was somewhat of a tyrant; but this is a foul slander, when directed against Samuel Warren, who would 'rather act upon the opinions' of other people, 'than abide by his own.' Nor could my attempt to sell a chapel in Scotland, without the consent of Conference, in which I was successfully opposed by one of my junior colleagues, who had little veneration for my age and wisdom, be fairly construed, after 'mature and deep thought,' into a contradiction of the preceding assertion; though by it I, of course, felt disappointed. During this time I had acquired a smattering of classical knowledge, and some 'dictionary learning,'—though, up to this day, I cannot at all times write English grammatically, as the first page of my 'Address' proves; but I account for this on the ground of my attention to other, and what are still to me, comparatively, 'unknown tongues.' I am aware that some small friends account for it in another way. After a time, and with much labour—and by adding to my costume what has been irreverently called, a red 'monkey's tail,' I managed to procure the degree of Master of Arts. I then felt—what I consider, 'with all deference,' to be—a laudable desire to become Doctor Warren. I got another station in Scotland, and spent a great deal of time, *not so much as a Methodist preacher as an University graduate*. I applied very assiduously to certain Doctors for testimonials—as to my learning, &c. &c.—and in some instances was ungraciously refused; particularly by one, who was a brother preacher. Thus was I again disappointed. However, after a great fuss, I procured LL.D. I then, of course, thought that the highest offices in the connexion were at my command, as they had been in the case of Dr. Adam Clarke—for a Doctor is a Doctor; but the stupidity of my brethren prevented their thinking as I, with my enlarged and superior mind, did; and, therefore, when I said, make *me* president—they said, 'call again to-morrow.' At the last Manchester Conference, I desired the office of senior Missionary secretary; but

the committee refused my *application*, and elected my antipathy. At another Conference, despite all my arguments, a sentence of a special district meeting at which I was a principal man, was reversed and declared 'cruel.' Thus, disappointment followed disappointment. To say nothing of the rejection of my 'Digest of Methodistical Law,' upon which I had spent so much pains, as the standard of our discipline; in consequence of which, the two volumes which were published at 12s may be obtained for 4s—a discount of $66\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. I came, therefore, to the 1st Manchester circuit, as my opponents would say, 'soured.' I bowed to one, with a grace that belongs only to myself—I nursed the radicalism of the radicals—was the humble servant of all—and became a favourite. Thus I prepared for my late grand attack upon the Conference. I approved of the Institution, and wished it to be called a College! till I found that there was no chance of my being made either an officer in it, or missionary secretary. *It was then* that I determined to get rid of the mask, which I had so long worn with great inconvenience, and which, to say the truth, was getting rather thin and nearly worn out. I tried to make a speech in the Conference, condemnatory of the whole affair, but, as I began to abuse individuals, they refused to hear me. All this, it is necessary to say, was done conscientiously and in the fear of God. I then, though dissuaded from it, published the speech, which certainly sold well, and made a great stir. The preachers remonstrated with me, and wished me to suppress it. This I most *obstinately* refused; and when brought to trial at a special district meeting—which I acknowledged over and over again, was the only course left my brethren—I *resolutely* refused to take my trial, because Mr. Bromley, my friend, was not allowed to remain, after he had grossly insulted the meeting. I was then, as you know, suspended; upon which I did all in my power to "agitate" the Methodist body, by bidding defiance to all rule and usage. Moreover, I determined heroically, but not vindictively or wickedly, I assure you, far be it from me! to appeal to the Vice-chancellor, who decided the cause against me, and gave me what I consider to be a very impertinent lecture. But I was not to be thus stopped, and though dissuaded from the attempt by my legal friends, I referred the case to Lord Lyndhurst, who, my son assured me, would reverse the decision, in consequence of an article which he (my son), has written in *Blackwood*, laudatory of his Lordship. But his Lordship too decided against me, very much to my mortification, I assure you. Yet no wonder, his Lordship is a Tory, and the Conference are Tories. I regret the Whigs were not in office at the time. But a truce to politics. Thus I am saddled with a tremendous debt which must be paid shortly somehow. I built a Tabernacle in Manchester to oppose Oldham-street, and this has increased my responsibilities. My friends of the Grand Central Association are not so ready and liberal with their subscriptions as I expected. One, a great man, promised me £100; but has deducted £15 for travelling expenses to London and back. Some will not give me any thing because I have 'not won,' which you know is not my fault but my misfortune. A 'millstone is round my neck;' and matters would be worse, did I not keep possession of the house belonging to the trustees of Oldham-street chapel—which some say is very mean and paltry, and which I would not do if I could do better; but of that I have no prospect at present. I beseech you, therefore, Christian friends, as you value your liberties and me their defender; as you admire obstinacy, I beg pardon, I should have said firmness of purpose; as you respect consistency; as you would keep me out of jail—to which I am willing after all to go if you think proper; as you venerate the name of my great forerunner, Alexander Kilham, of blessed memory; as you would ruin the Wesleyan Missions, schools, and trustees; as you would starve the old and afflicted preachers, widows, and orphans; as you would "reduce Methodism to a state of ruin," to

'Put your money in the plate,
Or I, your preacher, cannot eat.'

I would just observe, in conclusion, that the balance has been against me in several of my journeys, and, therefore, I earnestly hope for a good collection this evening."
Manchester. OMEGA.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We perfectly coincide in opinion with our correspondent, in reference to the great northern tale which appeared in the last *Lantern*. To the triple calling of the Association we must now add the office of publishing reputed facts, the knowledge of which it was impossible for them to obtain but by the most deeply dishonourable means. In reply to a gentleman in Sunderland, who remarked that the local meetings had not sufficient power, a minister of this town is said to have advised the people to draw their purse-strings tighter. Mr. Hickling, of Birmingham, has very properly cleared himself of the unutter-

able baseness of betraying his friend, Dr. Clarke, by reporting private conversations said to have taken place in his own house, and we doubt not Mr. Vint is equally honourable. Both gentlemen, it seems, are beset by snakes in the grass, who turn out to be in correspondence with an Association of creatures like themselves. It is uncertain whether this be an original story, or a new edition of an old one, improved and adapted to present circumstances, as the Leeds protestants say the remark was made in *their* town and to *another* person. If the thing ever occurred, it was on this principle, that some weak people have been so often told by such men as Gordon, that the preachers are "just like" highwaymen and pickpockets—that when they talk of a want of "power," they are really afraid of being robbed; and this minister thinks that the best way to tranquillize their minds, is to convince them that their money is *certainly* under their own control. But the "system" said to be recommended in Sunderland is *not* that which is "tried" at present. A few years ago, when common decency was respected, those who closed their "purse" thought themselves bound in honour also to shut their mouths; and, as some of them had long done much more harm by their speeches than good by their contributions, the loss of both was a clear gain to the connexion. As to the present "system," which consists in an endless attempt to subvert Methodism, after having clearly forfeited all moral right to meddle with it at all, by ceasing to support it, certain we are that it could not possibly be recommended by any honest man.

A correspondent reminds us that the Association are very much "disgusted" with our paper about the "convicts" in another hemisphere, and say that it is "very low." We hope they will candidly allow that, as disputants, we are obliged to meet our opponents on their *own* ground; and that this theatre, whether high or "low," was first selected by their oracle, Gordon, when he said the preachers were "just like highwaymen," who wished to "rob and murder" him. The conception was once thought to be so sublime that, at Manchester, it was "listened to with intense interest," and "cheered for a considerable time." It is plain, from the *Lantern*, that people may sometimes mistake their own abilities, and it seems *we* have done so; for, we thought, the idea was lofty rather than "low." By including in the Association all expelled persons, on both sides of the world, a circumference was provided worthy of the "Grand Central," and seemed to make the whole affair "grand" indeed. But we have been mistaken; and as people sometimes go from one extreme to the other, we now believe it to be utterly impossible for any man to raise such a "low" thing as the delegate meeting. Six persons met at Stockport, some of them not even members of the Methodist society, and, after some deliberation and carefully looking at the matter on all sides, *four* of them were finally dubbed "delegates" by the other two, and sent to legislate for the Wesleyan connexion. We admit that this is "low," even beneath contempt; and maintain, that even the genius of Milton could not make it otherwise.

Our correspondent is not quite correct in saying that the Association separate many things, and unite none. Though Gordon has separated the Dudley "leaders' meeting" from the Conference, it is to remain in strict connexion with his own dramshop, and to be employed in restoring its respectability, which was thought to be damaged by the "light words" of Mr. Wesley. The avocation of the *Christian Advocate* is not quite simple, but at least twofold. However zealously he may endeavour to *separate* the church from the state, he labours with equal assiduity, from week to week, to *unite* Methodism with "Morison's pills." This principle of union "extends through all the extent" of his labours for the sins of the Methodist preachers, the virtues and exploits of Dr. Warren, and every thing else are all tacked to the—"pills." We should not wonder but the Conference, bad as it is said to be, might easily convert that bitter enemy into a friend, if it would only submit to make "a proper use of its authority," and consummate this *union* by recommending to all the Methodists and their friends throughout the world, to begin forthwith to take a certain quantity of the "pills," and go on increasing the number every day, so long as there was life or property remaining. But this must be done quickly, if it is done at all, for the "pills," the "balm of gilead," and every thing else, is likely to be soon eclipsed by the healing virtues of the "preachers' fund," recently discovered. An Irish minister, who has long been ailing, infirm, and not merely useless, but a burden to the church, having received a sum of money from this famous "fund," has suddenly become hale and strong, and is now labouring in Liverpool, Manchester, and elsewhere, with distinguished efficiency and acceptance!

We present our cordial thanks to our Preston correspondent, for his *illumination* of the delegates from that town to the late futile meeting at Manchester, *yclept* provisional! Pomfret, it appears, was originally a *roomite*!—a party who separated from Methodism a few years ago, and so termed from their meetings being held in a *room*! He afterwards became a Wesleyan, and for a short time was a local preacher and leader; but not being permitted to preach when and where he pleased, among ranters and such like, during his connection with us, he joined the Protestant Methodists—alias "the orchard people." He is famed for nothing in Preston, but his opposition to the Wesleyan Methodists.—Johnstone, the second of the motley group from Preston, was a violent political radical, and a warm partizan of the notorious Henry Hunt—*quondam* M.P. and blacking maker. Like his brother delegate, Pomfret, he is one of the *orchard*, or Protestant Methodists, but never was connected with the Wesleyans.

Our correspondent, "A. B.," is informed that the *four* delegates from Stockport were delegated by a meeting composed of *six* people, of which they constituted *two-thirds*, only two of this number were members of the Methodist society; one of whom has been subsequently suspended from his office as a local preacher, and the other has written a letter to the Grand Central Secretary to withdraw his name.

The inquiries respecting *James Lamb* are numerous; our readers shall not be long kept in suspense respecting him. We shall then largely avail ourselves of our Irish correspondence.

We regret that an article entitled "Leaders' Meetings," for the constitutional principles laid down therein, and for the answers it contains to several important queries which have been proposed by our readers, is, solely from its length, unavoidably postponed until our next. It found its way to the printing office, but could not receive insertion.

Communications have also been received from "Epsilon,"—"Omega,"—"Omicron,"—"R. D."—"G. F."—"A Friend to Methodism,"—"An Enemy to Duplicity,"—"Sigma,"—and "Mentor."

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THE ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
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THE DISCIPLINE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT OPPOSED TO THE
PRIMARY PRINCIPLE OF THE MANCHESTER DELEGATES.

We took occasion, in our last number but one, to combat the leading principle of the Manchester Delegates, as applicable to the divine appointment and powers of the ministry. We now take up the scriptural discipline of the church, with the intention of showing that it is directly opposed by the resolution, that the people "shall possess the right of interference in all its affairs." Had that resolution affirmed the right of every person to exercise his judgment in placing himself under the discipline of the church;—taking, at the same time, the consequences; for which consequences he is only answerable to God;—then, we could have no ground of quarrel with the proposition. But when it is assumed that, after such person has voluntarily united himself to the Christian church, and placed himself under its *regime*, he possesses the "*right* to interfere in all its affairs," including the discipline which relates to himself—this involves a principle against which we demur.

Discipline, in general, refers to two things: the order and communion of the church; and the piety and morality of its professing members.

In the primitive and apostolical church we read of several kinds of offices—sacraments and ordinances—the preaching and administration of the word of life—the communion and fellowship of the saints; together with the numerous duties and obligations the different parties owed to each other. The discipline of the church is, consequently, no other than the regular, united, and harmonious operation of the whole and entire system, according to the arrangement of its founder and Head. If we find from the word of God, that the offices, the ordinances, the preaching, the communion, and the duties of the fellowship are enjoined by Christ, then, discipline consists in every person occupying his right position and performing his own duty. This is, we conceive, the substance of Christian discipline itself; the power to watch over and superintend its execution is another thing, and must be separately considered. There is a difference betwixt legislation and magistracy. The supreme power of a state only possesses the right of legislation; but a magistracy is essential

to carry the law into force. In like manner, Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity, alone, can have the power to give the principles of his own economy, and announce his own laws; and this power, as exercised by others, can only be delegated and ministerial. We propose to consider the following proposition in opposition to the preliminary resolution of the Delegate Meeting, which, if proved from the Word of God, must, as far as truth and argument are concerned, settle the matter against them.

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH IS COMMITTED INTO THE HANDS OF ITS PASTORS, AS THE GUARDIANS OF ITS PURITY, AND THE SUPERINTENDENTS OF ITS ADMINISTRATION.

Our first proof of this proposition shall be taken from the fact, that the deposit was, in every instance on record in the New Testament, made to the pastors of the church. This may, indeed, be fairly inferred from the commission they received to propagate the gospel. The discipline of the kingdom of Christ must be inherent in itself; and as the ministers of religion were the persons commissioned to establish that kingdom in the world, it follows, that the right or duty to administer its discipline would be included in their commission. The first ministers of the gospel were not merely the heralds of its truth, but the founders of the churches; and, consequently, their office not only related to the enunciation of the doctrines of Christianity, but also to the enforcement of all those rules of order and morality which are essential to the very existence of a Christian church. When this commission was given to the Apostles and others, the churches themselves were not founded, so that it could not be an authority to be exercised conjointly between the ministers and the people, much less given or modified by the latter, because they had no being; and we find no prospective limitations in the words by which the Apostles were authorised to preach the gospel to every creature.

But we have direct, as well as inferential proof of the truth of our proposition; and to that proof we more especially appeal. The evidence of the New Testament is so full, that it will allow us to make every deduction which may be required in favour of the superior authority and extraordinary office of the Apostles. That some of the rights and powers of these directly inspired and divinely commissioned servants of the Lord Jesus, were of a more elevated nature than those of the ordinary ministry, and only intended to continue for a limited period, may be readily granted. Yet even in this a great principle is involved, which must not be lost sight of, viz.—the class of persons with whom the trust was deposited. The trust itself may have been of an extraordinary nature, and in all subsequent cases not repeated, and yet the tenure on which it was held, be applicable to succeeding instances of ministerial right and obligation. We instance the committal of the keys of the kingdom to St. Peter—the power to bind and loose given to the Apostles—and their right to remit sins. As these prerogatives are supposed by many writers to be extraordinary and limited to the Apostles, we would remark that, although they might belong to the Apostles in the highest degree, they may, in an inferior degree, belong to all ministers, and in this they may be the representatives of all succeeding pastors of the church. It may be true, that the keys of Peter were, as many argue, given to unlock the kingdom of God to both Jews and Gentiles, and, in this and many other respects, were of an extraordinary character; and yet, it may be equally true, that every minister, called of God to his work, may receive a key to unlock the truth, open the door of salvation to lost sinners, and, in the sense of admitting and excluding members, to “bind and loose.” The Apostles might possess a power to “bind and loose,” by the exercise of a commission which they could sanction and enforce by miracles, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira; but it does not follow from this, that the succeeding race of ministers did not hold the power *declaratively*, as Knapp says, “earnestly to exhibit before the impenitent and unconverted the consequences of their sins, the divine punishments; to admonish them, to counsel and exhort them to repentance; and, on the contrary, to comfort and console the penitent; and to convince them with reasons drawn from the Christian system, of the mercy of God, and the forgiveness of their sins. This right,” this learned German remarks, “is derived from the very nature of their office, and cannot be denied.”

But our object in referring to these passages is not to define the powers conferred, but to shew that in this particular instance the exercise of discipline was entrusted with the pastors of the church. In this case, we find no limitations dependent on the suffrages, votes, and veto—or the “interference” of the people, in any shape or form. Our Lord did not say to Peter that he should possess “the keys of the kingdom of heaven,” in conjunction with the whole body of believers or of inferior officers; and that he should only apply them to the different locks and wards of its massive gates with their permission; or, by their assistance, throw them open to admit the Gentile nations. The keys are not put into *commission*, but are given into the hands

of the Apostles themselves. Peter, it is true, is only mentioned in this first passage; but we find the same power given to the whole of those favoured men in the passage in John xx., 21, 22, 23; so that it equally belonged to them all. The directions contained in Matthew xviii., 15—18, respecting private offences, were delivered to the Apostles alone. "These words," says Mr. Watson, "therefore, were spoken to the Apostles, as indeed was the whole preceding discourse; for the eleven, after they had disputed about superiority, by the way, joined Peter and Christ in the house; and the twelve being thus collected, and they only, our Lord delivers to them that series of addresses which this chapter contains." It follows, that the authority conveyed in the 18th verse is not given to the church collectively, for our Lord was not addressing himself to it, but to the Apostles:—"Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."—The most sober and moderate interpreters have, with great reason, held that this binding and loosing referred to *things*, not men; and was a power committed to the Apostles to administer the discipline of the church on the model just given by the discourse of our Lord, and also of future revelations to be made known by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit. The power thus conferred might be extraordinary and limited, and in that be peculiar to the Apostles themselves; but it is not with this that we have at present to do, but with the fact, that though the instructions in question related to the church, yet they were committed into the hands of such church officers as then existed, and not to the church in its collective capacity. Our modern innovators, assuming that *every member* of the church has the right of "*interference*" in the administration of its discipline; our object is to trace out the manner in which the power of discipline is conferred from the beginning, whether on the church collectively or on its officers.

We are informed by St. Luke, in the first chapter of Acts, that our Lord "shewed himself" to the Apostles "alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; and that by the Holy Ghost he gave them commandments." If we turn to the latter chapters of the gospels, we shall meet with some of these "things pertaining to his kingdom;" and amongst others, the commission formally given to the Apostles, to preach his gospel and to exercise spiritual government. In Matthew, chapter xxviii., 18, 19, 20, it is said—"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach (*μαθητεύσατε*, disciple) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: *teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." In John xx., 21, 22, 23, our Lord is represented as enlarging the powers of this commission. The instructions were given at different times and places, and the language is not the same. The passage in John may be considered as explanatory of that in Matthew and the other evangelists:—"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

In these sacred transactions between the Apostles and their risen Lord and Saviour, in which he was conveying to them his final oral instructions in the "things pertaining to his kingdom," we find three or four distinct subjects: a commission to preach the gospel—a power to disciple the people, by instructing them to "*observe*" all things which they had received from him—the right to administer the ordinance of baptism, in the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—and, in the passage in John, whatever may be meant by the terms, the authority to "*remit sins*." Here we have not only the elements of all discipline, but the Apostles are formally inducted into the office of governors of the church by the authority of its Head. There is something singular in these transactions. The persons in question had been called to the Apostolic office—that of bearing testimony to Christ—previously; consequently, the powers now conferred were not such as to make them Apostles, but were an addition to their former duties and obligations, and related to the administration of discipline. As long as Christ remained, personally, with the church, he exercised the power of government; but now, going from them, to his Father and their Father, he explained and then conferred the rights of a subordinate spiritual government upon his Apostles. There is not the remotest intimation, in all these solemn interviews between Christ and his Apostles, that the government of the Christian societies was intended to be democratic, or, up to this period, even of a mixed description. No parties are mentioned, in the command of Christ to preach the gospel—to disciple all nations—to baptize them in the name of the adorable trinity—and to retain or remit sins—declaratively, and in the exercise of church power, but the Apostles. Then, up to the time of the Saviour's

ascension, there is no proof of a deposit of administrative power and government being given to the collective members of the church, either to be enforced by themselves or to be delegated to others. At the period of our Lord's separation from his church there must have been a number of believers, though not united in church order and communion, yet still, devoted to his cause, as his professed disciples. Had he intended that his church should have been founded on the democratical model, and the people possess the right in all things to "*interfere*" in the system of Christianity, one would judge that this was the most fit and suitable time to have expounded the principles of such a scheme of polity. As disciples were now devoted to him, as well as the ministerial office established, it is reasonable to suppose, that, had it been the intention of the great Head of the church to establish, through all time, a Christian republic, he would have summoned both *people* and *pastors* into his presence, and from the nucleus of such republic already existing, have unfolded its principles and instructed the new society how, in all future times, it should independently manage its own affairs, administer its own government, and elect its own officers. How does the matter stand in respect to this? Instead of summoning the two parties before him, we find all his intercourse on these questions held with the Apostles alone, and the whole administrative power committed into their hands.

The next subject for inquiry is—Whether the Apostles, in forming Christian churches, committed its discipline into the hands of the religious societies thus founded by their own ministry, or invested their pastors and officers with that obligation and duty? It is impossible to imagine that these divinely inspired teachers of Christianity could mistake the meaning of their rights or duties; or that they could, from ambition or any other mean passion, usurp the rights of the church! The Spirit, resting upon them in his plenary inspiration, would guide them in all they *did* as well as all they taught. A candid investigation of the question we have proposed to discuss, will lead to the conclusion that the discipline and government of the different sections of the church were entrusted, by the Apostles themselves, to the ministers and officers; and there is not the least reason for believing, that the representative scheme had any place in these primitive Christian societies. Some reliance, however, being placed on two or three isolated passages, in support of a contrary opinion, it is but fair to examine them. The writer of this article having occasion to consult some of the standard authorities on the opposite side, found himself referred by Calvin, in his Institutes, to only one passage, Acts xiv., 23, in support of the suffrages of the people being taken in the election of pastors to their office and investiture with its rights. Another authority, Knapp, remarks—"The Apostles *never* imposed teachers upon any church, but left to the churches the enjoyment of the right belonging to them of choosing their own teachers. This right of choosing their officers (the term is here changed) was sometimes exercised by the churches and sometimes *they left it* to the Apostles, or persons commissioned by them, to whom was committed the care of the public affairs of the church." This German *liberal* even out-Herods Herod in his notions of democratic power, for he places the Apostles themselves under the authority of the church. He says, "*they never* imposed teachers upon the church;" and "this right of choosing their officers was sometimes exercised by the churches, and sometimes *they left it* to the Apostles." He then refers to Acts vi., 2, 3, 4, 5—2nd Cor. viii., 19. As these passages are chiefly depended upon, together with Acts xv. and 1 Cor. v., in the argument from scripture, in support of the independent rights of the church, and, consequently, that discipline and government primarily belong to the private members, it may be proper to turn to them.

The passage in Acts xiv., 23, relates to the ordination of elders, and is as follows: "And when they had ordained elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." The point in debate, arising out of this passage, relates to the manner of ordination. Calvin and others contend that it was by the suffrages of the people, expressed by the lifting up of the hand. Because the word rendered "ordain" (*Χειροτονήσαντες*), literally refers to the lifting up or stretching out the hand, they have maintained that the reference was to the votes of the people, taken in the common method of ascertaining majorities by a shew of hands. Nothing, however, is said respecting the people lifting up the hand, for the entire allusion is to Paul and Barnabas. They ordained these elders; and the hands lifted up, were the hands of these Apostles, raised or stretched out, and laid upon them, as the visible sign of their being set apart to their office. We had collected many authorities on this passage, but our limits will only allow us to quote that of Dr. Hill; (Lectures, vol. 3, p. 410, 411):—"And with regard to those officers in the church which were not, like the office of deacons, chiefly secular, but which implied the exercise of spiritual authority, there is not any passage which, when fairly examined, will

be found to intimate that it was conferred by the act of the people. One passage which is chiefly relied on as giving independency, is Acts xiv. 23. But besides that, *ΧΕΙΡΟΤΟΝΕΙΝ* before the time of Luke, was used for simple designation, without the exercise of suffrage, as is plain from his own expression, Acts x. 41; it is applied in this passage, not to the people, but to Paul and Barnabas; so that, whatever be the meaning of the word, it can only be considered as making known the part which these disciples took in the appointment of the elders.*

The transaction mentioned in Acts vi. 1—5, relative to the appointment of deacons, by no means proves the independent right of churches to elect its own officers and administer its own discipline. Instead of this right being considered inherent in the private members of the church either by themselves or the Apostles, we find that the "multitude of the disciples" were perfectly silent on the question in dispute respecting the "daily ministration" to the widows, and so far from claiming the power to interpose and settle this question, it was the Apostles who called them together. Hence the *franchise*, to use a modern phrase, on which they proceeded to choose the seven deacons for the approval of the Apostles, was not one which they possessed in consequence of their being members of the church—natural and inherent; but was one which was conferred by the authority of the pastors of the church. This power from the Apostles, extended exclusively to their "looking out from among themselves seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost," that "*we*," (the Apostles) "*may appoint over this business*." Having made the choice of seven men, whose names are mentioned, they "set them before the Apostles; and when they had prayed they laid their hands on them." Nothing can be clearer from the whole of this proceeding, than that the church itself did not understand that its own private members possessed the independent right to choose its own officers, or administer its own government. They did not claim the power even to look out, or to choose from amongst themselves these honest men, till they had received it from the Apostles; and when they had done this, the choice was not final and complete till the candidates had been examined (*set before*) the Apostles, and they had laid their hands on them. Besides, there is no proof that at this era, the office of deacon itself had any ecclesiastical or spiritual functions. We find, in tracing the history of the church as far as the divine record carries us, that, Bishops, Elders, Angels, Evangelists, and Apostles, sustained ecclesiastical or spiritual functions; but we never read of deacons doing so. Some of them, indeed, appear in the character of evangelists afterwards; and in this character we find them preaching the gospel and administering ordinances: but they might have passed from this lower office of administering the funds and alms of the church to that of evangelist, by the call and designation of God. When Philip is represented as preaching in Samaria, and baptising the Eunuch, he is spoken of as an evangelist and not as a deacon. It follows from this, that these "*good men*," whatever they might become afterwards, were not chosen by the multitude of the disciples to any pastoral, ministerial, or governing office at all, but simply to the office of ministering to the necessities of the poor. We are quite aware that the office of deacon afterwards became an ecclesiastical function, and so it remains in the church of England to this day; but its original institution was simply, as we state it, a right conferred on the church by the Apostles, in conjunction with themselves, to select certain individuals to distribute their charities amongst the poor.

A transaction of a somewhat similar nature is mentioned in 2 Cor. viii., and especially v. 19, which has been unwarrantably pressed into the service of the independent or representative scheme. The churches of Macedonia, it appears, determined to administer to the necessities of the poor saints at Jerusalem, who, by a famine or some other calamity, were exposed to great privations and sufferings. St. Paul was present amongst them at the time they were exerting themselves to raise funds for this purpose, and ardently exhorts the Corinthians to imitate their liberality. Internal evidence shews that the Apostle sent Titus and the "brother," whoever he might be, "whose praise was in the gospel through all the churches," previously to going himself to forward this business; and he informs them that Titus was most ready to perform this task of his own accord; and he was the bearer of this epistle. As the Apostle himself was going up to Jerusalem, these churches of Macedonia had requested him to be the bearer of their charity, "Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints." Instead of taking this office upon himself, in conjunction with Titus, he appears to have recommended them to elect a messenger of their own to be united with

* If any of our readers wish to prosecute the inquiry further on this text, they will find ample satisfaction in Hammond, Whitby, Bloomfield's Notes to the Greek Testament, Stillington's Irenicum, &c.

them in this business. Hence it is said—"And we have sent with him (Titus) the brother whose praise is in the Gospel through all the churches; and not that only, but who was also *chosen* of the churches to travel with us with this grace (gift) which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind;" or, as Macknight paraphrases it—

"19. However that is not my only reason for sending him: he was also chosen of the churches of Macedonia to accompany me to Jerusalem with this gift, which I have been the instrument of procuring to the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, himself, and to afford you an opportunity of showing your readiness to do works of charity to the saints.

"20. The sending messengers with me to Jerusalem I suggested to the churches, taking care of this, that no one should blame me as unfaithful in the management of this great sum which is procured by me for the saints.

"21. Previously considering what was comely in this affair, not only in the sight of the Lord, to whom I chiefly desire to approve myself; but also in the sight of men, from whose minds, I wish to remove any suspicion, which might hinder my usefulness."

Because the churches thus *chose* a person or persons, to carry their charities to Jerusalem, it has been strenuously argued that this is a proof of the independent and infeasible right of the disciples to elect, by suffrage, their own officers, and administer the discipline of the church. Whether this principle is true or false, we think it would be extremely difficult to establish it on this transaction. For, first, the person chosen by the churches was "*sent*" to them by the Apostle; and, from this, it appears that the whole business was arranged under the Apostle's own guidance and direction.—Then, secondly, as their messenger, he travelled in company with the Apostle and Titus, and discharged the duties of his charitable embassy in union with these non-elected men. But, thirdly, he was elected to no office whatever. Even the office of deacon is not mentioned. He was simply chosen and sent, for the purpose of bearing this "*gift*" of charity to the poor saints, and here his duties terminated. It is true the person so chosen might be a preacher; and, as he passed through different places, and even on his arrival at Jerusalem, he might exercise the duties of his ministry; but, *their election* did not confer on him the office; it went to entrust to his care and management the charitable funds of their church, and nothing more. The paucity of proof in support of the independent right of the church to "*interfere* in all its affairs" is very apparent from the stress laid on this passage in support of the notion, that the people ought to elect their own ministers and officers. We see that no office of any description is mentioned, or can by any possibility be referred to; and, consequently, nothing is proved in support of the democratic theory. The only plausible argument which ever has, or could have been raised on these proceedings, is an inference that, because the practice of church suffrage is used in this particular instance, it must have generally prevailed. We confess, if we had no information beyond this text, on the subject of an appointment to spiritual and pastoral offices, we should be inclined to admit the validity of the reason. But, as it is, we have a vast multitude of unequivocal facts, fully and clearly establishing a contrary practice. The appointment of deacons, and the election of the person to transact this temporal business at Jerusalem, indeed, proves one point, which we, with great readiness, admit, viz.—that the Apostles and primitive preachers of Christianity were anxious to free themselves as much as possible from the obligation "*to serve tables*," that they might "*give themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word*." This principle is fully established by these transactions; and, we confess, it would afford us much pleasure to see an arrangement, equitably made, to free the ministers of our own connexion from secular concerns. It is not the management of the funds for which we contend; but the spiritual rights, freedom, and efficiency of the pastoral office; and that not to confer a "*lordship* of ecclesiastical rule over God's heritage; but that "*the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified*."

The next occurrence which has been much relied upon in this controversy, in support of the free and independent suffrages of the private members of the church in the exercise of discipline and government, is that so largely entered into in the xv. chapter of the Acts. On a full examination of this case, we confess that it has proved to be much less on the side of a popular "*interference*" than we at first imagined. It will be evident to every impartial person, that in adjudicating on the matter in question the people took no part. Let us examine the point in all its particulars.

First. The mooted question at Antioch respecting the obligation of the new converts to observe the rite of circumcision, was not submitted to the whole church; but to the Apostles and Elders, see v. 2. This proves two or three points of some consideration. As, first, that the independence of separate societies did not then exist; for, if it had, the church at Antioch would themselves have claimed the right to settle this question, which was one of discipline. It shows, secondly, that, though the societies of Christians were, of necessity, separated from each other by distance, yet the church was then

considered *one*, and existed under a common superintendence. Thirdly, that a pastoral government is here explicitly acknowledged, *on a point of discipline*, for the matter is not laid before one church by another, for their opinion and judgment; but a church, avowedly as an aggrieved or agitated party, make their appeal to the "Apostles and Elders." This shows that the pastors of the church were then acknowledged as the legitimate authorities to examine the facts, and adjudicate in the case.

Second. Paul and Barnabas were received of the church, in conjunction with the Apostles and Elders, *to hear* the account of their success in the conversion of the Gentiles, verse 4. In the course of their address in this mixed assembly of the ministers and disciples, at Jerusalem, these preachers to the Gentiles were led to relate the case in dispute, no doubt in connexion with the inquiry it had occasioned, and the obstructions it had thrown in their way. Nothing, however, as yet, was done by this mixed assembly.

Third. It is stated expressly, "And the Apostles and Elders came together for to consider of this matter." These terms evidently imply a *separate* meeting of these officers at a different time and place. We are not informed, as to the manner in which the judgment was taken, neither is this material. They were inspired men, and the question was settled under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; for it is said in a subsequent part of the proceedings, "for it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay none other burthen upon you." The fact is as clear as language can make it, that the church, collectively, did not consider the case, debate the mooted point, or determine by a show of hands, how the matter should be settled, and issue their decree accordingly. The question was submitted to the Apostles and Elders; and, in their pastoral and administrative capacity, under the inspiration of the Spirit, they came to their decision.

Fourth. The multitude of the believers appear to have come together again to hear the result, and the farther statement of Paul and Barnabas; or, in case they had remained, the Apostles and Elders must have retired to a separate place, and returned with their decision. This is possible; but the probability is, that the whole transaction did not take place at one meeting.

Fifth. James, as the president of the assembly of Apostles and Elders, proceeds in his own name, to pronounce judgment; giving, at the same time, reasons for it to the assembled brethren. He does not take their vote to ascertain their opinion in any way; but separately gives judgment; for this is the literal meaning of the words used. St. James says—*ἐγὼ κρίνω*.—I adjudge; or, as it is rendered "*my sentence is*, that ye trouble not them which from the Gentiles are turned to God."

Sixth. Then after the decree had been settled by the Apostles and Elders, and the questions adjudged by St. James, a letter to the churches was agreed upon, to be delivered by certain persons "chosen to go with Paul and Barnabas." In these proceedings, the assembled brethren evidently unite and take a part. The reason for this is stated: "Then pleased it the Apostles and Elders, with the whole church to send chosen men of their own company with Paul and Barnabas—namely, Judas, surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren." Dr. Adam Clarke remarks on this part of the transaction—"James determined *what* ought to be done; and the whole assembly resolved *how* that should be done."

Seventh. In consequence of their sending chosen men from amongst themselves with Paul and Barnabas, as bearers of the "decree" of the Apostles and Elders, they—the brethren—are united in the letter to the churches, as we find various brethren united in affection in the subscriptions of the epistles. They send greeting "to their brethren in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia." Giving by this the proof of their cordial acquiescence in the decree of the officers of the church, and their good will to the Gentile Christians.

Eighth. Then, fully to settle the question, as to the persons who framed the decree itself, and how it was accredited, both by those who delivered it and those who received it, it is said in the next chapter, 4th verse, "And as they went through the cities, they delivered them decrees for to keep, that were *ordained* of the *Apostles and Elders* which were at Jerusalem.

Thus it is evident that this disputed question was not settled by the suffrages of the people, either in the church at Antioch, or in that at Jerusalem. The people take no part in the adjudication of the question: in the one case, advice is sought, and in the other, a deep interest is felt—an approval of the measure of relief expressed—fraternal affection manifested—and "chosen men" sent to aid the Apostles, and to bear their united token of good will. But the case itself is judged by the Apostles and Elders, in the exercise of that pastoral superintendence which was committed into their hands by the Head of the church; whilst James, their president

the bishop of Jerusalem—and most likely their president on that account—issues the necessary decree for the government of the torn and distracted churches of the Gentiles.

One other case is confidently appealed to in support of the right of the private members of churches to give an independent suffrage in the administration of Christian discipline: it is that of the incestuous member of the church at Corinth. The first part of this case is largely referred to in 1st Cor. v., 1 to the end of the chapter; and the second in 2nd Cor. ii., 1—11. This person being expelled from the communion of the church, and also, on his repentance, restored to it again, the simple question for consideration is—whether these took place by the pastoral authority of the Apostle, or by the independent vote of the members constituting the society. We have no account that this church exercised any judgment in the case of this delinquent, but they rather connived at his guilt. The cause is entirely adjudged by the Apostle himself; and it is exclusively on his authority, and by his direction—and indeed, command—that he is “put away.” “For I, verily,” says the Apostle, “as absent in body, but present in spirit, have *judged*”—or, as the margin reads, “*determined*—already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath done this deed; In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” “Therefore,” he says, “put away from among yourselves that wicked person.” The Apostle does not direct this people to call a church meeting to come to a fair and impartial decision on the subject, by a show of hands, and then to separate the guilty person from their communion; No; he tells them he had “*judged already*,” and all that was left to them was the execution of the sentence. It is very clear from internal evidence that they acted on the authority of the Apostle, and the guilty man was expelled.

Repenting of his sin, this poor man was restored to his forfeited fellowship with the church. The only remaining question is—whether he was restored by the ministerial authority of St. Paul, or by the free and independent suffrages of the people?—Evidently by the direction and instruction of the Apostle. It should seem that they were disposed to treat the penitent with some degree of harshness; and hence the Apostle tells them—“Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many,”—settling by this the amount and termination of his punishment. He then directs them to “forgive him,” to “comfort him,” to “confirm their love towards him;” that he was ready to “forgive the sin for their sakes, in the person of Jesus Christ;” and he tells them he had written to them on this subject—probably referring to his former as well as his present communication—that he might have a “*proof whether they were obedient in all things.*” The language of St. Paul is much more soft and gentle in his directions on the subject of the restoration of the penitent than in the expulsion of the profligate; but this last expression demonstrates that he required the church to do both as an act of obedience to his pastoral and Apostolic authority; and did not direct them to exert what is now considered an inherent right and power possessed by all the private members of the church, either in their own persons or by their delegates, viz.—an independent suffrage in the government of the societies and the administration of its discipline.

Having carefully and, we are certain, candidly examined the most considerable passages which those who are favourable to the democratic scheme of church government judge most essential to their argument, without one iota of proof that they are so, we now feel ourselves free to offer *positive* evidence that the administration of discipline was committed into the hands of the pastors of the church by the Apostles, down to the period when the inspired narrative is closed.

The names employed to designate the sacred office are all descriptive of authority. *Ἐπίσκοπος*,—Bishop—Parkhurst describes, “An overseer, an inspector; one who hath the inspection and oversight—a superintendent.” *Πρεσβύτερος*—Presbyter or Elder—Amongst the Jews, an elder of the people, or elder of the synagogue, as an alderman amongst ourselves, was an officer of authority. Stillingfleet, and many other writers have shown that the term as applied to the ministerial office, was borrowed from the Jews, and had the same signification as amongst them. Hence, bishop and elder, are indiscriminately used in the sacred writings, in reference to the same person. *Ποιμὴν*—Pastor—is a term used of God: “the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;” of Christ: “I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep;” of political rulers, or kings: “Cyrus—he is my shepherd, and shall perform my pleasure;” so of ministers: “He gave some—pastors and teachers.” The phrase is taken from the well known practice of the shepherd tending, guarding, watching over, and leading his flock, in the wilderness. Amongst other terms employed, in describing the ministerial office, is that of *Κυβερνήσις*—rendered “governments.” There has been much difference of opinion on the question, whether this was

a distinct office, or a quality and attribute of the functions of the ministry in general ;—but none respecting the meaning of the word. We find in the same enumeration of gifts—"miracles, gifts of healing, prophets, teachers, diversities of tongues;" now it is well known that none possessed these so fully as the Apostles and other ministers; consequently, they are, in these cases, descriptive of endowments, several of which were enjoyed by the same individual. In like manner, "*governments*" is not, we conceive, a distinct and separate order of office, but the quality of an office already existing. The term itself is highly important and expressive. It refers to the pilot managing or steering a ship; "he had the care of the ship and government of the seamen therein, and sat at the stern to steer; all things were managed according to his directions." On the whole, the fair inference from the signification of these names to every person desirous to know the truth, is, that the office of the ministry is one of spiritual superintendence and authority.

The instructions of the Apostles to the inferior officers of the church, relative to the discharge of their duties and the appointment of other persons, go to prove that the administration of discipline was in the hands of these officers. St. Paul's address to the Elders of Ephesus is to the point :—"Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The reason assigned is most affecting; and is, alas! applicable to other times, places, and men :—"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also, of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." How descriptive—to the letter—is this statement of the evils existing amongst us at this day! But we must waive this; it is with the Apostle's address to the officers of the Ephesian church that we have now to do. He states that "*the Holy Ghost*," and not the votes of the church, had made them overseers; and then the term by which they are designated, "*overseers*," is itself expressive of pastoral superintendence, care, and authority. They were "*to take heed to all the flock*," and also to feed the church of God, which he had purchased with his own blood." Here then we have not the remotest reference to the independent suffrages of this church. Had this been the form of government, the whole case might have been differently stated. The Apostle, one would think, would either have sent for the church, visited them, or if he chose only to have seen the Elders, he would have instructed them to use these pastoral functions in such manner as to secure the independent rights of the people; to be careful to take their votes on questions of discipline; and to administer the rules of the society in conformity with the judgment of the multitude, freely expressed. Nothing of this occurs, and these "*overseers*" are held responsible for the security of the flock.

In a similar style, St. Peter addresses himself to the Elders of the church :—"The Elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory which shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but ensamples to the flock." Here again, the elders are instructed to "*feed and take the oversight of the flock*." They are directed to do it "*willingly*," not for "*filthy lucre*," or to lord it over God's heritage;" but still they are to do it: that is, they are to do a lawful thing in a lawful manner. As this word, "*feed*," occurs very often in connection with this subject of spiritual oversight, it may be worth remarking, that it means to lead and govern, as well as to supply nutriment to the flock. In this sense, it is employed in reference to Christ. "And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule (*Ποιμανῆν*) my people Israel." As the term is used in reference to the inferior pastors of the church, it must include this meaning, subject to such limitations as must always attach to the rank they hold in the Christian economy.

Respecting the mode of appointing officers, and the powers conferred, by this appointment, Dr. Hill strikingly observes, in his Lectures—

"Accordingly the qualifications of those who were to be made Bishops, and Elders, and Deacons are mentioned, not in Epistles to the churches; but in Epistles to Timothy and Titus, who are directed to the proper method of trying such as might be admitted to take part with them in overseeing the church of God. The judgment of the qualifications is vested in those, who, having been themselves, found qualified, may be supposed capable of trying others; their act, following upon their approbation, is the solemn investiture of those whom they have found worthy; and they are the instruments by which Jesus Christ conveys to that order of men, which he meant to continue in his church till the end of the world, the authority implied in the exercise of their office."

In conformity with these views, we find these two eminent evangelists were directed to appoint persons to the office of the ministry. After having largely described the qualifications of a bishop, and also of a deacon, in 1st Timothy iii. 1—13, he adds, "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly. But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." These directions did not refer to his private walk as a Christian, but how he might act in the regulation

of the church, as regarded its officers. In 2nd Timothy, ii. 2, he says, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." To Titus, we have similar instructions, chap. i. 5—"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every city, as I had appointed thee."

The appointment to the ministerial office being thus evidently not from the church, but from the Lord, by the ordination of the Evangelists and Elders, on evidence given of their qualification; the next question is—whether they are held responsible for the administration of the entire system of Christianity, or whether an exception is made on the subject of discipline? Ample instruction and admonition is given on the subject of their spirit, example, and doctrinal fidelity; but do we find any directions respecting their accountability to their divine master for the faithful administration of his laws? They are held responsible; and, indeed, the passages on this subject are truly awful and appalling. "They watch for your souls," says St. Paul, "as they that must give an account." This is best elucidated in the several Epistles to the *Angels* of the seven Asiatic churches. These messages from our Lord, no doubt, are intended for the reproof and amendment of the churches themselves; but they are made to their several pastors, and what is unusual—the singular number is used in them all. The church is addressed in the person of its "*Angel*," and he seems to be taken as the representative of the society. All the charges of corrupt doctrine and antinomian practice are denounced on him first, and then through him, upon the respective churches; so that, while they are the subjects of rebuke in the second and remoter degree, he is so in the first instance, and is made to meet the frowns and anger of the injured Saviour. "To the *Angel* of the church of Ephesus,"—"I have somewhat against thee,"—"Thou hast left thy first love,"—"Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place except thou repent,"—"To the *Angel* of the church of the Laodiceans write:—thou art neither cold nor hot—so, then, because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." This is the style of these Epistles, and it clearly shows that these "*Angels*" had fallen with the people, and were made the special subjects of rebuke; and were held responsible in a high degree for the corrupt state of the churches, and must give an account. "I charge thee," says St. Paul to Timothy, "therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom. Preach the word, be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own hearts shall they keep to themselves teachers having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

In accordance with these sentiments, the people are commanded—"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief." Innumerable passages speak the same language, but the limits of our little publication forbid us to proceed. This subject is by no means exhausted, and we are quite aware that there is another side of the question. That there is a right and a wrong way of administering the discipline of the church, and that its officers are bound to adhere to the rules and principles of the New Testament; that they have no right to "lord it over God's heritage"—to exercise "dominion over the faith of" the people—to infringe on their just and scriptural rights, or in any way to prevent their full enjoyment of all the privileges of the Christian fellowship—to make that fellowship irksome and uneasy, or any thing, indeed, but a rich blessing; in a word—the order of the church ought to be so maintained as to secure the full enjoyment of Christian blessings to all its members, and also to encourage and develop their virtues and gifts for usefulness in any department to which God may call them. Hence wisdom, gentleness, impartiality, long-suffering, and the tenderness of love, in the highest degree, must be requisite in those who are called to the onerous and difficult task of superintending Christian societies. No church officer can have the right to exercise discipline in an arbitrary manner. His commission obliges him to observe the rules of that spiritual kingdom in which Christ has been pleased to call him to office. These views are not at all inconsistent with our previous remarks; and we are as much prepared to support the rights of the people against the aggressions of tyranny, as we are to vindicate those of the pastoral office against the claims and pretensions of a novel democracy. We are persuaded, that the only way of preserving the purity and liberty of the church, is, for all parties to keep in that position in which the laws of the institution place them, abstaining from the invasion of each others immunities, and also cherishing a frank, generous, and affectionate spirit.

We imagine, our argument from the scriptures, shows that there is no foundation in the laws of Christ, and the practices of the primitive church, for the assumptions of the Manchester meeting of Delegates—which, stripped of the verbiage in which its leading principle is conched, and reduced to the form of a simple proposition, is neither more nor less, than, that the administration of the church is not a subject of scriptural ap-

pointment, but is the free and independent right of the people in their associated capacity. That they originate its offices, fill them, interfere with and control the whole economy, and consequently so modify the Christian institution as to make it altogether a system of freemasonry. This assumption we totally deny, and hope we have proved that the government of the church is provided for by its Head.

LEADERS' MEETINGS.

While we utterly reprobate and denounce a spirit of division, so entirely inconsistent with the principles and maxims of Christianity, we would inculcate upon all with whom we have influence, the duty of studying with that attention which the importance of the subject demands, the great topic of Christian unity, in perfect harmony with *diversity*. He who understands this, will not only *pray* for, but endeavour to *keep*, the peace of Jerusalem. It is possible for Christian societies to be *joined together in the same mind and the same judgment*, or it would not have been enjoined upon them by divine authority; at the same time, it is probable, they may not all *see eye to eye*, in things which are *minor and non-essential*. On subjects which do not affect the constitution, harmony, and prosperity of a Christian community, diversity of sentiment may and ought to be allowed; and in no society of Christians is such a latitude of sentiment permitted, as in the Wesleyan connexion. But we are more and more convinced that schism has its origin, not so much in the head as in the heart. The intolerant spiritual pride, the "ineffable hypocrisy," and the debasing selfishness which have marked the track of the "Central Association," wherever they have made inroads on the peaceful churches of our Zion, have been followed by those divisive and withering influences on the welfare of our societies, which are equally revolting to common sense, natural liberty, and Christian charity. Individuals are to be found, in close connexion with our body who do not fully and implicitly approve of every usage found in the connexion with which they are united; these, however, to their honour be it spoken, have never been associated with those who are the first to sound the alarm of war.—They have found it much better in lesser matters, if they have faith to have it to themselves before God and to exercise forbearance and self-denial, rather than, for the sake of some trifling difference, to endeavour to originate a new party, or remain destitute of the blessings, and violate the obligations of social Christianity.

Happy would it have been for many, if, prior to the breaking out of those unprincipled dissensions, which have recently disturbed the peace of certain societies, had the members diligently and calmly endeavoured to understand those leading principles on which the Wesleyan constitution is based. They would not then have suffered by being driven with the wind of discord, or tossed by the waves of religious agitation. They would have been able to have given an answer to every one that asked them, respecting the *why* and *wherefore* of the Methodist economy, they would not have been at the mercy of every stammerer in ecclesiastical, and, especially, in Wesleyan polity, who fancied he had a *gift to tinker* the old, or to frame a new constitution for the connexion; but like men grounded and settled, they would not only have been able to speak with the enemy in the gate, but have put to silence the ignorance of foolish factious and discontented men. Beneficial results are already arising out of this controversy, the youth of the body are directing their attention to the principles of the constitution, and a spirit of inquiry has gone abroad, which we hail as the dawn of a far more glorious day than olden Methodism ever saw, and which will not fail to render the connexion still more efficient, as an instrument in the hand of providence in the evangelization of the world. Add to this, our youth in the ranks of the ministry, have not been unconcerned spectators of the struggle; they have responded to the call of duty, and have buckled on the armour; they have displayed an indefatigable promptitude in hastening to their respective scenes of conflict, and quitting themselves as men anxious for the welfare of the ark of God, and the safety of the flock of Christ, they have manifested a spirit worthy those able and undaunted veterans in the church, whose sons in the ministry they are. The aspect of the rising generation of Methodists both lay and clerical augurs sufficiently for us, of the healthy and vigorous condition of the parent; and while the children are ready on all occasions to honor and esteem their fathers, whose hoary locks proclaim the lengthened years "in which they have borne the burden and heat of the day," those fathers we know will not be ashamed of their children.

On indisputable authority, we are warranted in stating, that inattention to the principles of the Wesleyan constitution, and a want of an acquaintance with the relation which each class of officers bears to the other, have led to the propagation of an opinion, which is at once in direct opposition to the existing laws of Methodism, and

calculated to diffuse a spirit of discontent and insubordination and radical democracy, not only to the injury, but to the utter destruction of peace and order in any society, whether civil or religious. Hence it has been said, that in the late proceedings in the Liverpool North and South circuits, the preachers have most lamentably exceeded the bounds of the law, in their eagerness to expel individuals from the church of God, by removing them from the society without a majority of the leaders' meeting consenting to such removal. In justification of this charge against the preachers, the dissentients have referred to a collection of rules,* published in the year 1800, in which the word "majority" is found; they say, in "explanation of the usage then prevalent in taking the sense of a leaders' meeting on the expulsion of a member or officer" of the society. It is sufficient for us to state, that this "edition" of the rules is altogether unauthorised in the body; in fact, no code of Methodist law at present in existence, is authentic, but the Minutes of the Conference, as published annually; and to these documents alone shall we refer as authoritative and binding.

We say then, that inattention to the principles of the Wesleyan constitution, and want of acquaintance with the relative position of the various office-bearers in the body, have led most decidedly to the adoption of the idea just mentioned. We are told, as if *ex cathedra*, that leaders are, *bona fide*, the pastors of the Methodist society; if this principle be conceded, and it is the office of a leader to govern and rule the church, then, we must acknowledge, they have a right, in common with the preacher, to fix the punishment due to an offender. This, however, we must unequivocally deny; and in a future number, shall not fail fully and deliberately to bring this topic before our readers. The question now before us, is this: have the preachers gone beyond law in the expulsions which have recently taken place? In order duly to investigate this point, we ask, what are the powers which are constitutionally possessed by the leaders' meetings, respecting the admission or expulsion of members from the society? We answer as follow:—

"(1.)—The leaders' meeting shall have a right to declare any person on trial improper to be received into the society; and after such declaration, the superintendent shall not admit such person into the society.

"(2.)—No person shall be expelled from the society for immorality, till such immorality be proved at a leaders' meeting."—*Minutes of Conference*, vol. 1, p. 375.

From this we learn that the expulsion of members is by no means made the act of a majority in the leaders' meetings. If the above law could by any rule of propriety be so interpreted, it must inevitably follow that the superintendent is not only stripped of an important part of his pastoral authority, but also of all responsibility in regard to the acts of this majority. But in direct opposition to this we read, page 377, of the same document, that "the members of our societies are delivered from every apprehension of clandestine expulsions, as that superintendent would be bold indeed who would act with partiality or injustice, in the presence of the whole meeting of the leaders. Such a superintendent, we trust, we have not among us; and if such there ever should be, we should be ready to do all possible justice to our injured brethren." This extract sufficiently proves that the law does not contemplate an interpretation which makes the expulsion of members the act and deed of a majority; the responsibility of the punishment rests upon the superintendent.

A leaders' meeting is not a legislative assembly; this is the character of the Conference, and—which so far from being surrendered by the concessions of 1797—was explicitly recognised and confirmed by the delegates then gathered together, and instead of this recognition from being surreptitiously introduced by a *ruse de guerre* of the preachers, it was actually drawn up by the delegates themselves, and adopted almost *verbatim et literatim* by the Conference. The public avowal of the Conference as the supreme authority of the connexion emanated from the lay delegates, and this authority the Conference will not—dare not surrender. The leaders' meeting was also constituted by the concessions of 1797 so far a *judicial* assembly by making the leaders the judges of the guilt or innocence of the parties accused; more than this the delegates of 1797 did not desire. They saw that constituting the leaders' meeting a *legislative* assembly, all fixed rules as standing authority would, in effect and operation, be abrogated, and the connexion be thrown to the mercy of mutable majorities. Law

* The Association has said much respecting a certain document published at the book-room in 1800, which they denominate "an edition of the rules of society;" on examination, this pamphlet is found to be nothing more than a gratuitous exposition of Methodist law, destitute of a name and published by no authority. We regret that the lesson the Association was taught in the Courts of Chancery—when an attempt was made to foist upon both the Lord and Vice-Chancellor an un-official copy of miscellaneous extracts from the Minutes of Conference, in the place of the proper and authorised "Form of discipline established among the preachers and people in the Methodist societies," but which was rejected by both those legal authorities—did not lead them to refrain from the attempt of practising an imposition, equally gross, on the Methodist societies. When will the Association learn common honesty?—Ed.

must be paramount, to be law at all. If, however, majorities are to determine every thing connected with the Methodist body, the *lex scripta* of the body becomes mere waste paper; all uniformity in the exercise of discipline is destroyed; and an act which a majority on this (Thursday) evening may be deemed perfectly innoceuous, may by a majority next Thursday evening be considered highly criminal, and then and there visited with summary punishment.

The concessions of 1797, while they secure the authority and responsibility of the pastoral office, guarantee to all members of the Methodist society their just rights and privileges. Before this era of Methodism, the superintendent might advise with the leaders on the introduction of members into society: now, he is restrained from admitting any whom the leaders' meeting judge improper persons. Formerly the superintendent could expel from the society any whom he himself deemed unworthy: now, he cannot remove from church fellowship any person until his offence be proved before, and to the satisfaction of, the leaders, whose business on such occasions is to decide upon the fact. Previous to this period the superintendent could appoint and remove officers without control and as he saw fit: now, this power is placed under salutary restrictions, and he cannot appoint or remove leaders or stewards from their respective offices, but in conjunction with the leaders' meeting.

When, therefore, a member of society is charged with an offence before the meeting of the leaders, it is the business of the meeting to decide upon the fact, whether the person before them is guilty of the offence, or, not guilty. They are not empowered, in case they bring in a verdict declaring the offence to have been proved, to determine what the sentence shall be; this is left to the preacher, who, as judge, must award the punishment. By the leaders acting the part of faithful, and honest jurymen, the liberties of the people are protected against any undue exercise of the pastoral authority—the admirable balance of our well-tryed constitution is preserved, and an impartial administration of ecclesiastical discipline is secured to all. But, should the leaders on account of prejudices conceived, or by being actual participatists in the criminality of the accused be unable to give an honest and just verdict, provision is made in the constitution of Methodism, that law shall be observed whatever the consequence may be. If the late leaders' meeting, in Leeds-street, Liverpool, had not committed that suicidal act by destroying its own legal existence, and had continued to protect the guilty in the committal of acts opposed to the laws of the body, the Rev. S. Jackson had his remedy, by which the discipline of Methodism would have been enforced; we mean a special district meeting; this, however, the *wiseacres* of Leeds-street prevented, by voting the superintendent out of the chair, a deed which we are warranted in saying they have regretted most deeply ever since, for by it they very quietly, and most satisfactorily to the preachers, placed themselves beyond the pale of the Wesleyan community. When the constituted and ordinary authorities of Methodism fail through weakness or turpitude to perform their functions, and to maintain the laws and discipline of the connexion, the district meeting, specially called, has a right to interfere, as was the case in Leeds, in 1827, and which, so far from having effected the ruin of Methodism in that populous town, has, under God, caused it to flourish beyond all former precedent.

We confess we discover nothing in the recent proceedings of the several leaders' meetings in Liverpool, at variance with the spirit and letter of Methodistical law. Majorities have never yet assumed the authority of law in our body, as it is wished by many they should now possess. The decisions to which they would arrive would be wild and capricious, and a new rule of action would be of every day occurrence. Our laws are well known and are the same for all; and no leaders' meeting has the power to determine by a vote whether or not they shall be enforced. When an individual enters the society, he is supposed, voluntarily and in good faith, to assent to these laws as the condition of his membership, and he is taking far too much upon him, after he has been welcomed with kindness into the Methodist fold, and for years been protected in the enjoyment of his privileges by its rules, and nourished in divine grace through the instrumentality of its ordinances, to join the revolutionary cry, "raze it, raze it." Such ingrates we have recently met with! We envy not their feelings. For ourselves we are determined to extend the influence and blessings of constitutional Methodism, unmoved by the sneers of the ungodly, the timidity of the wavering, or the treachery of its *quondam* supporters.*

* We take this opportunity of recommending to the attentive perusal of our readers a pamphlet which has recently been published, from the pen of the Rev. W. Vevors, entitled, "A Defence of the Discipline of Methodism;" this, with his two "Appeals" to the Methodist public are the product of a well disciplined mind, and the result of a perfect acquaintance with the practical workings of the Wesleyan polity. Every member of our society ought to read them with care. They are highly creditable to the heart and head of the amiable and talented author.

SKETCHES OF THE "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION;" OR, "MEN SINGULARLY FITTED FOR GREAT ACTIONS."

(Continued from our last.)

"MR. JOHN HULL," though he has ceased to figure *publicly* as a Methodistical reformer, yet claims a passing notice, from the prominence with which his *name* and *works* appear in the history of the first opening of this wonderful crusade. An odd kind of chill creeps through one's mind on the mention of his name. But as it is probably nothing more than a *nervous* sensation, resulting from some unaccountable operation of galvanic causes—for we hold that there is galvanism in *mind* as well as in *matter*—we pass it without further notice. This gentleman has been for many years well-known and greatly respected as a member and leader in the Wesleyan Methodist society; but, unfortunately, he has seemed all along to be possessed with the idea—at least, he has *goted* on the principle—that it is impossible for him to be mistaken on any question, either of fact or of opinion. The consequence is that he has frequently been brought into collision with his friends; and, mistaking mere obstinacy for a virtue, has stood fast in the integrity of his own error, where better knowledge would have taught him it was his duty to yield. Some years ago, during the prevalence of violent disputes, in the Manchester societies, it was his misfortune to take a stand, in the maintenance of which—whether right or wrong, it is not our business to inquire—he placed himself in opposition to the preachers, and to those friends by whom the preachers have in general been most faithfully supported; and he has never lost the savour of the spirit which he then displayed. Since that time, at least, if not from a much earlier date, his principles as a Wesleyan Methodist have shown a *tinge*, most plainly indicating a deeply-seated and irremediable *taint*. The just and natural result of this has been, that though in other respects a very worthy and upright man, yet he has never, until lately, borne any higher office in the society than that of a leader; it being manifest that he had too great a leaning to his own understanding and to the principles of ecclesiastical democracy, to be trusted with any office which should give him a commanding and extensive influence. Unless he be greatly misrepresented by report, and by his own friends, he has felt this exclusion as a sore grievance; but it is now demonstrated to all, there was good reason for it; and it had probably been well, for himself as well as others, had it been continued to this day. For the first time in his long life he is appointed circuit steward; and lo! one of the first uses which he makes of the influence connected with that office, is to support a faction who are bent on revolutionizing Methodism. We know he will resist this charge; for as it is his practice never to retract a charge which *he* has made against another, so it is his practice also never to admit the charges which others may allege against himself. Therefore, our readers may expect to hear from him accordingly.

In the proceedings of the quarterly meeting of the First Manchester circuit, on the subject of the Theological Institution and Conference reform, he took a prominent share; and, after reading a letter containing the most scandalous reflections on the Conference in general, and Mr. Bunting in particular, he proposed the following most sapient and orthodox resolutions:—

"1. That this meeting views with sentiments of most decided disapprobation the recent establishment of the Wesleyan Theological Institution: which, in the judgment of this meeting, is calculated to produce the most deteriorating effects in the original character of Methodism, and ultimately to subvert it.

"2. That the unprecedented haste with which so monstrous a step has been taken, without at all consulting the sentiments of the connexion at large, through the medium of their public officers, according to regulations made at Leeds in 1797; and in defiance of the most serious remonstrances both of preachers, trustees, and societies, has created the utmost alarm for the safety of the body; convinced, as the members of this meeting are, that the officers of the Institution will possess the means of rendering nugatory the decisions of quarterly meetings and of district meetings.

"3. That this meeting is deeply impressed with the conviction that Mr. Bunting's acceptance of the presidency of the Institution, in conjunction with the senior secretaryship of our foreign Missions, is incompatible with the peace and happiness of the connexion; that his retiring, at any rate, from one of those offices is indispensably necessary to restore confidence to the connexion, and allay the dangerous excitement which such measures have, especially of late, occasioned; but it is the opinion of this meeting that the Institution should be forthwith discontinued.

"4. That, under the influence of these views, this meeting—anxious, above all things, to preserve the original constitution of Methodism—is determined, by every legitimate means, to resist the alarming innovations and encroachments of undue power, and are fully satisfied that, instead of such conduct being likely to occasion division in the body, it is the only method of preserving unity."

Of course, Mr. Hull, as the mover of these resolutions, could see nothing in them but what was rational and temperate, in the highest degree; and above all, as he sturdily maintained at the time, he could see nothing in them that, in the slightest measure, approached to any thing like *personality*! But the fact is, that himself and the other members of the self-elected cabinet, were so ashamed of them, in the course of a few days, that at the *hasty* and (Methodistically) *illegal* meeting, subsequently held, they

were withdrawn, in order to make room for other resolutions of a milder character, and in which the *name* of Mr. Bunting was prudently omitted. In advising the calling of that meeting, as he acknowledges he did, and in his observations at the meeting, he proceeded on the supposition that Dr. W. *would probably be suspended* at the approaching district meeting, and that the quarterly meeting would by that means be deprived of Dr. W. as its chairman; hence his haste to summon the members of the quarterly meeting before the proper time, and his objection to any adjournment of the meeting beyond the 20th October. But, strange to tell! ever since that time he has *spoken* and *acted* on the principle that Dr. W. *was not*, and *could not be*, suspended by that meeting; and by one sweeping sentence of condemnation—which, after falling on the heads of the two Judges of the Court of Chancery, rebounds and rests upon himself—he has declared that none but a *fool* could ever have supposed the contrary! We should have been exceedingly sorry to apply the term to him gratuitously; but having unwittingly taken it to himself, whilst in the act of applying it to others, we shall let him wear it as long as he pleases—

“And leave him *alone* in his glory.”

“Mr. J. J. LEES” has been shown off in sundry places as a powerful and splendid advocate of the Association, and must not, therefore, pass unnoticed. He came from London, as we learn, about two years ago, and is now settled in Manchester as an Agent for the sale of Morison’s Pills. Our readers are probably aware that the proprietorship of these wonder-working pills and of the *Christian Advocate* is partly in the same hands; and they will not, therefore, be surprised to hear that the best efforts of the Manchester agent in question, have been used to push the latter as well as the former into extensive circulation. We have never had an opportunity of witnessing his powers of oratory; but we are told they are of such a sort as to fit him admirably for the double duties which he sustains. Almost immediately on his arrival at Manchester, he was received upon the plan of the first Manchester circuit, as a local preacher; but rumour says this was too hastily done, and that certain inquiries ought to have first been made of the Rev. W. Naylor, London. We are a little surprised not to find his name amongst the speakers at the late meeting of the delegates in Manchester. Is his stock of eloquence *purged* away, or do his friends begin to think so?

(To be continued.)

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our contemporary declares, “we never publish facts on anonymous or questionable authority.” Their *facts*, no doubt, are authentic; their *fiction*s, it seems, are apocryphal. We quote the following from a Sunderland paper, in answer to our correspondent “Argus” :—

“The *Christian Advocate* of Monday last, contains a paragraph extracted from the *Watchman’s Lantern*, in reference to a conversation assumed to have passed between the Rev. Samuel Jackson, who formerly travelled in the Sunderland circuit, and Mr. James Vint of this town. Now, as Mr. Vint is an inhabitant of this place, and a respectable individual, we deem it our duty in our public capacity, to defend his character from the insinuations of the writer of the paragraph, especially as Mr. Vint, *in toto*, disclaims the imputed conversation. We would take this opportunity of admonishing the editor of that penny trumpet, the *Watchman’s Lantern*, and the redoubtable writer of the *Christian Advocate*, who seems equally reckless, not to tamper with the character of a respectable gentleman, and assign to him a position in the ecclesiastical world in which he is by no means anxious to be placed. The paragraph in question is calculated to exhibit the individual whose character we feel it our indispensable duty to defend, in the light of an officious, disaffected, meddlesome, and factious personage—whereas, his real character is too generally known, and too duly appreciated, to render it possible for the most malevolent scribe to injure it.”

TWO BLACKS CANNOT MAKE A WHITE.—The Editor of the *Lantern* is in a sad case about the Leeds-street robbery. He says, indeed, there was no robbery: but admits the “Leaders retained the class-money in their hands, by desire of their classes,” and because it was “their own.” Yet somehow or other, they became alarmed, or ashamed, and, in short, could keep “their own” money no longer; and so were obliged to relieve their burdened souls by sending it to the *real* owners, namely, the circuit stewards. He will have it that they have not stolen £18 8s 4d; but is too prudent to deny the notorious fact, that they have actually made *restitution* to that amount. The Association, it seems, have a notion that a portion of lost character may be recovered, by making other people as bad as themselves; so they now seek, by open attack and intimidation, to prevail on the committee for the erection of the new chapel, to betray their trust, and return a part of the money to a few choice friends of the *Lantern*. It so happens that the resolutions for the formation and management of this fund, having passed the June quarterly meeting, 1834, were immediately printed, and a few copies are still in existence. According to this document, the “express promise” that “the money should be returned, if the chapel was not immediately commenced,” is a simple fabrication. The 4th resolution says, “as soon as the sum of one thousand pounds is procured the ground shall be purchased:” and the 7th provides that “the money shall not be applied to any other purpose; but returned to the subscribers,” when the managers despair

of ultimate success. As they really are "all honourable men," we are quite sure they will give due notice to the parties concerned whenever they feel themselves in that state of mind. These resolutions, were *unanimously* adopted by the above meeting, of which the "agitators and disturbers of the societies" were a part; so that, if they have been "humbugged" it is their own act and deed. Yet, says the *Lantern*, it is quite an "absurdity" to think of a new chapel, instead of selling the old ones. Be it so. If the "men singularly fitted for great actions" may commit a robbery, surely common people may be indulged with an "absurdity." Oh, but the persons have been "illegally expelled." So says the *Lantern*, while the Lord Chancellor says that the suspension of Dr. Warren was "perfectly legal;" and if so, then the Association, which arose out of his case, is a great combination to resist law, by protecting him, and is, of course, in itself an outrage upon all law. The members of its managing committee were, therefore, justly expelled; for in Methodism, whatever becomes of majorities, law must be paramount, and every man must finally submit to its authority. After asking us several questions about what is to be done with this money, the writer adds, "I do wait for an answer." We beg leave to inform him that, to the best of our knowledge, the committee are so impressed with the disgraceful affair at Leeds-street, they are quite afraid to tamper with public money, and are, therefore, determined to apply it to the one sole object for which it has been given, namely—to purchase ground, and build a chapel, as soon as practicable. Having now answered his question, we shall take the liberty to tell him a secret or two. In the first place, we rather think that whatever sums are *given* to this treasurer, towards the new chapel, he is resolved to keep and to apply accordingly; and, therefore, if people intend to cry, like babies, to have their money back again, they had better never give it at all. Secondly, could the *Lantern* prevail upon these gentlemen to misapply the funds with which they have been entrusted, still the case of the Association is desperate, as even that could not transform them into honest men, for "two blacks can never make a white."—As to the pother about the missionary box, the money it contained was either *given* to the missionary society, or it was not. If it was not, we advise the parties to bring the robber to justice. If it was, then by that act it became public property, and was no longer at the disposal even of the original donors; and the man did perfectly right, whoever he was, in handing it over to the treasurer of the society.—Having now answered our contemporary's queries, at least plainly and directly, if not to his satisfaction, we shall continue to become querists in our turn. As he has called upon a number of gentlemen to betray a public trust, and to rob a church, in order to accommodate a few friends of the Association, it would be satisfactory to the public to know what these friends have done to entitle themselves to such an indulgence? Or, for what services is this sacrilegious reward to be conferred? Is it because they have formed an Association to spread strife and discord through the connexion? Or, because one of them said, he had broken the law and he gloried in it? Is it for the manner in which the matchless *jury*, at Leeds-street, performed their solemn duties, when they—1st, with "ineffable hypocrisy" pleaded scriptural precedent in order to screen an accomplice in guilt—2d, proposed to give their verdict *before* hearing the evidence—and 3d, become sulky and resolved to give no verdict at all? Or, is it for turning the preacher out of the chair? Is it for saying the vestry door was closed, when it was never closed at all? Is it because "mine host" has not only proved that he is either a gentleman or something else; but even exposed himself to the lash of the law, by repeatedly disturbing the congregation with his announcements? Or, is it because their friend Gordon, some "dissenting ministers," and a miscellaneous mob, have made themselves into a leaders' meeting, in order to do justice upon the Dudley preachers? Or, is it because Dr. Warren has gone to law with his brethren, lost his cause, received a public rebuke, and is now wearing the "millstone"? Is it for divulging that wonderful piece of Association morality to be found page 250, and contained in these memorable words, "Witness their society tickets, they are a fac-simile of those of the Conference, in order that, even in appearance, there shall be no more difference than cannot be avoided." We know that by these "fac-simile tickets" people are both "deceiving and being deceived." Are public funds then to be misapplied in order to reward men for teaching that forgery is a virtue, and that uttering lies by wholesale is a proof of brotherly love? We have other questions to be put afterwards. In the meantime, we do wait for an answer.

We frankly inform Mr. John B., *alias* "Ignatius," &c. &c. that unless he ceases inflicting his anonymous nonsense upon us; or, at least, unless he save us henceforth the expense of the postage of his letters, we shall be compelled, in self-defence, to divest him of his cap and jacket, and show the *animal* with his true cognomen to our readers, by publishing his "last," together with several other letters addressed to various persons, but have found their way to us—all of which are in the hand-writing of Mr. John B., although wearing different signatures.

A correspondent informs us, that when Mr. Killey's class was met in order to receive tickets, the person alluded to in *Lantern*, p. 271, did not avow himself a member of the Association until the Rev. G. Marsden had given the ticket and received the quarterage. Mr. Marsden saw the deep duplicity of the conduct of this Associate; and, after intimating a hope that he would soon have done with the faction, passed on to the next member in rotation. Had Mr. H. been influenced by a sense of common propriety, he would, without hesitating, have refused his ticket. This, however, would be expecting too much of the Association. Men who can forge Methodist tickets and publicly boast that the forgery is as complete as they can make it, are not the men who will relinquish their hold, when once a ticket is in their possession!

We regret that the valuable paper of "Epsilon," is unavoidably postponed until our next, together with an account of Dr. Warren's Adventures in Sheffield.

Communications have also been received from "A Lover of Methodism,"—"Delta,"—"An Observer,"—"Omega,"—"H."—"Mentor,"—"An Old Methodist,"—"J. M."—"C. J.,"—"Epsilon,"—and "Javon."

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THE ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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THE POLITY AND SUCCESS OF WESLEYAN METHODISM.

On the important subject of church government there has been for many ages, and there is likely to continue for generations to come, a difference of opinion among good men. We are of a class of persons, and they are neither small in their number, nor feeble in their influence—who believe that no *particular form* of religious polity, is, by any divine commandment binding upon Christian societies; but that certain great *principles* are contained in the New Testament, on which all ecclesiastical order ought to be founded. Tyrannical as we are both suspected and reported to be, we are on this subject more liberal, in the sound sense of the term, than many individuals who, in their boasting professions, seem to monopolize all that accords with liberality of sentiment unto themselves. It appears to us that while the scriptures teach there must be government in the church, yet much is left to circumstances as to the precise form which it shall assume; and hence the want of uniformity in this particular among various Christian communities, which ecclesiastical history unfolds to its readers. We are of opinion, that God has left men as much at liberty in reference to sacred as to civil polity. There must be government in the state; God having ordained it for his glory and the happiness of mankind; but whether it shall be a monarchy, or an aristocracy, or democracy, or a mixture and balance of these several forms, as in the British constitution, the oracles of God are silent. So there must be government in the church of Christ; but whether it shall be episcopacy, presbyterianism, or independency, the scriptures do not determine or enjoin. Notwithstanding there is a considerable number of bigoted minds that give an undue consequence to each of these forms of ecclesiastical rule, and imagine they can see them *all* written in the bible as clearly as the proper divinity of the world's Redeemer, yet we are bold to affirm them to be under a delusion which is injurious to the peace and prosperity of Zion, for it generates in their breasts an unkindly and intolerant spirit.

The admirable system of Methodist polity was formed by the venerable Wesley under the leadings and teachings of the providence and spirit of the great Head of the church; and we, therefore, believe it to be

fundamentally right, inasmuch as its first principles are agreeable to the New Testament. It recognises government in the church to be an appointment of God, to "banish strange doctrines, to uphold God's ordinances, to reprove and rebuke, and, finally, to put away evil doers." It also acknowledges the right of ministers to administer this discipline *for* and even *with* the people, in such a manner as shall constitute a sufficient guard against abuse, without preventing the legitimate and efficient discharge of pastoral duties, as they are written in their divine charter. These grand elements of scriptural dominion in the associations of Christians are the *foundation* on which the structure of Wesleyan Methodism has been erected: and the more carefully we examine it, the more cordially we esteem it, and the more faithfully are we resolved to maintain its simplicity unimpaired. We know that a class of men who call themselves Methodists, hate the government of our connexion as intensely as we love it, and are using means, some of which are a disgrace to Christianity, to revolutionize its character. Their plan of reform, or more properly of revolution, is published to the world; and we are fully persuaded that it will never be accepted by the Conference. It *must*—it *shall* be rejected, for the following among other reasons:—

The proposed change in the polity of Methodism would be unscriptural in its nature.

The primary principles of church order as laid down in the holy scriptures, would be completely swept away. Government in a religious community would be considered not as the ordinance of God, but as the creation of man, to be moulded according to *his* fickle and lordly pleasure. The divine appointment of the ministry, with all its highly important and responsible duties, and with all its equally momentous powers which are essential to their fulfilment, would be "set at nought;" and the office must be conveyed to persons of competent gifts by the laity who shall, in all things, control it by their suffrages. The people under this system would not be content with a co-administration of the laws of Christ in the church, for they would claim, as was the case in another connexion, the *entire* administration of them through the preachers as the passive agents of their will. Now, such a new order of things would *not* "quadrate with the New Testament." To what extent it would be unscriptural, we have before proved in the *Illuminator*; and, therefore, we shall not repeat the evidence.

Again. *The demanded alteration in the government of Methodism would be mischievous in its influence on the religious condition of the body.*

The end of Christian fellowship is edification which consists in having the soul built up in the three cardinal graces of faith, hope, and charity. A Methodist society is "a company of men, having the form and seeking the power of godliness: united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation." This vitally important design, ought to be steadily kept in view, and every facility should be afforded for its accomplishment. And this desideratum will be best attained in a Christian community that is favoured with a settled government, and is, consequently, most free from the occasions of political excitement. Such a connexion is the *Wesleyan* with the government *as it is*. But radicalize it, and the revolution will have a withering influence upon the personal piety of multitudes, as well as in-

troduce among the societies an unnatural state of things. With these sentiments, we can heartily subscribe to the truth of the subsequent paragraph, to which we beg the attention of our readers :

"To raise into legislators and censors all the members of a church, the young, the ignorant, and the inexperienced, is to do them great injury. It is the sure way to foster debates, contentions, self-confidence; to open the door to intrigue and policy; to tempt forward and conceited men to become a kind of religious demagogues; and entirely to destroy the salutary influence of the aged, experienced, and gifted members, by referring every decision to numbers and suffrages, and placing all that is good, and venerable, and influential among them, at the feet of a democracy."

And again. *The required innovations in Methodism would be injurious by impeding the progress of its triumphs in the world.*

The justly celebrated Robert Hall is reported to have said in his latter days that, in reference to systems of ecclesiastical polity, he had begun to think, "whatever works best, is best." Many great and good men who have diligently studied the scriptures, the history of the church, and the condition of mankind, have been of the same mind. It is a test by which the opponents of Wesleyan government know we have not any objection to be tried. It can most nobly endure its application.—We may remind our readers that Methodism began its career in 1739, since which period it has "increased abundantly, and multiplied and waxed exceeding mighty," for at the Conference of 1834, it was ascertained, that the total number of Wesleyan Methodists in the four quarters of the globe, amounted to a *million* and upwards! Well may such a result fill us with wonder and love, and praise; and constrain us to exclaim, "What hath God wrought!"

A certain writer who is exceedingly hostile to the polity of our connexion, and who is evidently wounded with the proverb, that "it works well," has recently endeavoured to diminish the force of this practical argument in its favour. As he cannot deny the sun is in the heavens at noon-day, so he cannot assert that the body has not prospered. He tells us, however, that the success of Methodism is only "comparative"; for there are some places—and Liverpool is given as an instance—where the number of members in society has not increased for the last ten years; and this want of prosperity is assigned to "despotic government." Now, admitting this want of Methodist growth in Liverpool, what then? Will it follow that if our societies in that town had been under the dominion of lay delegation, they would have appeared more healthy and fruitful? If this question (as we know it will), be met with an affirmative reply, we would ask, how is it that the new connexion in Liverpool cannot report any progress? Why has that body *retrograded* there during the last *dozen* years? According to the minutes of 1822, the number in society was 337; and at the Conference of 1834, it was only 274! We trust these facts will demonstrate that a want of increase to the Wesleyan connexion in Liverpool, has arisen from some other cause than its "despotic government." We have no doubt that Methodism, in this great and populous town will assume, during the next half-score years, a widely different aspect. We cherish a sanguine hope, that the recent storms with which it has been visited will have the same purifying and reviving effect upon its energies, as similar tempests have, by the blessing of God, produced upon it in some other towns, within the last few years.

The writer, who has selected Liverpool to prove his principle that the success of Methodism is only "comparative," is under promise to give other instances from the minutes of Conference. We are not going to deny that some other circuits can be found whose numbers, in 1834,

are about what they were in 1824; but we shall boldly contradict the inference which is to be deduced from the facts. Whatever the amount of such circuits may be that do not appear stronger now than they did ten years since, we shall not, for we *cannot* allow, that the cause of their non-advancement is "despotic government." Are not all the circuits in the connexion under a common polity? How is it then that some circuits increase while others are stationary? The same laws have been in force in Liverpool as have been in operation in Leeds and Sheffield; yet how different have been the reports to Conference from these circuits year after year? If "despotic government" has *prevented* an extension of the work of God in Liverpool and some other circuits, that are to be exhibited to the public, how happens it that Leeds and Sheffield, and other towns have gloriously prospered?

Moreover, the writer on whose sentiments we are now animadverting, loves the New Connexion and wishes our form of government to be assimilated to the polity which characterises that body; but does he think, if this change were to be effected, that circuits would never be found for a number of years without numerical prosperity? The last ten years have been selected as the golden period of New Connexion success. Allowing his statement to be true, still it will be found, on examination, *only* a "comparative prosperity," though the body has not many circuits, yet we may select some that have not increased either by the conversion of sinners out of the world, or the accession of proselytes from other communities. London, Glasgow, Hull, Thorne, Macclesfield, Lane-End, Sunderland, &c., are *less* in the number of their members as reported in the Minutes of 1834, than they were in 1824! Is this *decrease* owing to "despotic government" on the part of the preachers? We trow not.

Again. We are informed that the success of the Wesleyan connexion is very far from being what it would have been under a more liberal polity; the prosperity which it has already realized is to be attributed to its doctrines, to the piety and zeal of its members, and in no degree to its government; because this has been "a clog to the wheel" of its moral machinery; and had Mr. Wesley formed the Conference on the plan of the New Connexion, Methodism would, ere this, have occupied "the world, and its blessings be carried and distributed through all lands." We may say of this argument against Wesleyan polity as it was said of the state of the Israelitish church, in the days of Isaiah, "there is no soundness in it;" and for the truth of this declaration we can appeal to those "stubborn things" which facts are felt and acknowledged to be. Had Methodism been from the beginning associated with republicanism, we are warranted to assert, that its success, so far from being greater, would have been very considerably less than the measure with which it has been sanctioned and endeared to us. The New connexion has for nearly forty years made the trial, and what is the result? With five thousand members to commence, and *with numerous accessions from other churches during its progress*, it numbered at the Conference of 1834, only about fifteen thousand souls!

The New system is said to contain all that is excellent in the old connexion, and to be entirely free from its "despotic government," which is "a clog to the wheel;" it possesses a polity more liberal, more reasonable, more English, more scriptural, more adapted to promote peace in the church and religion in the world; may we not then fairly inquire why has its progress been so *small*? And why in years that we can name has it *decreased*? Though "comparisons are odious," we are compelled, in defence of principles which are dear to us, to follow the example of those writers who, in their ungracious attacks upon Wesleyan Methodism, have been forward to institute them. As they have compared the two systems of church order, in their practical results, for ten years—though not with that degree of *honesty* which ought to have marked such a procedure, as will be seen by reference to No. 6 of the *Illuminator*—let us pursue the comparison for a few years beyond that period.

The increase of members in the Wesleyan connexion amounted in 1822, to 11,588; in 1823, to 9659; and in 1824, to 8678; making a total addition for three years of 29,925!! During this time of Methodist peace and prosperity, what was the state of the New Connexion? Was this body enlarging the place of its tent and stretching the curtain of its habitation? Did its government evince its special adaptation to "carry and distribute the blessings of the gospel through all lands?" No; some "clog was in the wheel." The Minutes of 1822, report a *decrease* of 51. The Minutes of 1823, announce a *further decrease* of 62. The Minutes of 1824, declare an increase of only 31;* so that there was a *decrease* on the three years of 82! It is only justice

* This trifling addition was joyfully recognised in the *New Methodist Magazine*. It contains an article on the Conference, which is signed "T. A." and it shows how eloquence can sometimes enrich poverty and adorn deformity. The writer says—"The vessel said by its enemies to be 'water logged,' is now making way, acquiring strength,"!! &c.

to say that this decrease is not large in its amount; but if the polity of the New community had been what its panygerists have recently represented it, these years of humbling and painful adversity could never have occurred; and the body, instead of being one of the least among the thousands of Judah, ought to have been a great people, the praise of whose works of pious enterprise should have sounded to the ends of the earth.

Having a knowledge of the preceding facts, it is impossible for us to believe that the government of Methodism is an impediment to its universal diffusion, and if it were to give place to one of a more democratic complexion, the prosperity of the connexion would be vastly augmented. By this radical change, the body would lose that *compactness* for spreading Christianity among the masses of people that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, by which, according to the candid and honourable testimony of James Montgomery, Esq., given at a late Missionary anniversary in Sheffield, it is distinguished from every other religious denomination in Christendom. To perpetuate this peculiar glory to the connexion, its present constitution, whatever may be the immediate consequence, must be preserved from falling into the hands of the self-styled "Grand Central Association," who commenced their revolutionary career under the taking profession of requiring *nothing new* in Methodism," for we are confident that their way of reforming it would crush its catholic spirit, paralyze its powers, and "singularly" unfit it "for great actions." And one of Dr. Warren's reasons against the Theological Institution is, in our judgment, most powerful against his own designs and those of his partizans to subvert the government of the Wesleyan Methodists:—"That the signal success with which it hath pleased Almighty God to own the course hitherto pursued indicates rather the wisdom of walking by the same rule, and minding the same things than of commencing a new course, however small the divergency may seem at the outset."

EPSILON.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—The agitation and differences which have of late unhappily pervaded certain portions of our once united societies cannot but have excited the deep regret of every one solicitous for the extension of the work of God amongst us. The idea of any circumstance arising to retard the progress of Methodism, which has for its ultimate object the salvation of the whole human race, involves a responsibility of the most awful kind on those to whom such impediment is attributable—a responsibility, too, be it remarked, to be accounted for, not to fallible men like themselves, but to that Great Shepherd who gave his life for his sheep, and to whom the salvation of one such redeemed soul is of infinitely more moment than are all the petty interests of men, connected, although they may be, with the revolutions of kingdoms, or the fate of empires.

It is not my intention, Mr. Editor, to enter into the question of ecclesiastical polity agitated by the parties in the present disputes. It is enough for my purpose to know that such discussions have produced, and are producing incalculable injury to precious souls; that not a few simple ones have been turned aside from the right way; and that a spirit of suspicion and jealousy of their spiritual guides has been infused which, while it continues, must, to a great degree, neutralize the efficacy of their ministrations, as it respects those under its baneful influence.

Various causes have been assigned for the existence of the evils now referred to. The Leeds case—the suspension of Dr. Warren—the defectiveness of our Methodistical constitution—and I know not what besides, have been adduced by the leaders of the Association as the root and spring of the dissatisfaction now existing. To none of these alleged sources am I disposed, primarily, to ascribe the present agitations; I believe their exciting cause lies much deeper, and it is with the view of attempting to trace this cause to its root that I have ventured to trouble you on the present occasion.

It has always appeared to me that the spiritual profit of the attendants on a gospel ministry is in no small measure dependant, under God, on the degree of estimation in which they hold the office and character of those who administer to them the word of life. The force of this position is so obvious to common apprehension as to render illustration almost unnecessary. To judge of its applicability, we need only refer to any subject connected with human affairs. If I am led to question the due appointment to office, or to distrust the skill or ability of the individual who undertakes to be my instructor in any department of science, that very suspicion must tend powerfully to neutralize the beneficial tendency of his teaching as it respects myself. If such be the result in matters of mere temporal concerns, its prejudicial effects in those connected with

our spiritual welfare will be so much the more aggravated in the proportion in which the interests of the latter transcend those of the former. The Apostle of the Gentiles was fully aware of the evils arising from a depreciation of the ministerial character. Even he, divinely and specially commissioned as he was, found it necessary, again and again, to combat the disposition to lower the sacred office, which, even in that age of the church's first love, began to exhibit its pestiferous influence.

It was, however, only in some very isolated cases that the Apostle had to complain of a deficiency of respect or attachment from his converts. The instances to the contrary afford a contrast of the most delightful kind. It will be sufficient to mention that beautiful exemplification of affection between pastor and people portrayed in the affecting narrative of his last interview with the members of the church at Ephesus. See Acts xx. 17, to the end. His strong testimony also, as to the degree of respect in which he was held by the Galatian converts, evinces the strength of attachment which should always subsist between the faithful pastor and his flock. The Apostle remarks, Galatians iv. 15—"For I bear you record that if it had been possible you would have plucked out your own eyes and have given them to me." In addition to these instances, we have the strong and oft-repeated injunctions of inspired truth as our directory. I would refer to 1st Tim. v. 17, 1st Cor. iv. 1, Heb. xiii. 7 and 17, Phil. ii. 29, and 1st Thess. v. 12 and 13. On the two last passages, I beg to offer one or two brief remarks. The original of that in Phillipians is scarcely adequately rendered by the English phrase, "hold such in reputation." The margin has it, "honour such." The literal rendering is, "hold (i. e. esteem) such honourable." The passage in Thessalonians still more forcibly expresses the estimation due to the ministers of Christ's flock. Our English rendering is, "esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." The expression "very highly" however, fails to convey the force of the Greek (*ὑπερ ἐκπερισσοῦ*), which denotes the superlative degree in its highest sense.—Perhaps it might be translated, "Let your esteem for them, grounded in love, be of the highest possible kind."

So far as my observation has extended, I have for years been of opinion that, generally speaking, we do not, as a body, hold the ministerial office in that estimation which is due to those who sustain the awfully responsible character of "ambassadors for Christ." Not that I believe the Wesleyan Methodists alone are in fault in this matter; a pretty general acquaintance with professing Christians of other denominations leads to the conclusion that a too low estimate of the pastoral office—and by consequence, an undervaluing of its ministers—is one of the besetting sins of our age. It is then to this disposition, Mr. Editor, that I am inclined mainly to attribute the dissensions which have agitated our societies. Had our people generally, in Liverpool and Manchester, been duly attached to their ministers, it is quite impossible that they should, for any matters of mere opinion, have been induced to go to such lengths as they have done, in systematic attempts to coerce into their own views those to whose ministrations they owe, under God, so much of the spiritual good which they possess. Had the Methodists generally been actuated by the spirit of attachment to their ministers which characterized the Ephesian converts, the attempts of some factious individuals to sow disunion among them, would have passed away innocuously.

But it must not be overlooked that the duty of attachment from the people to their pastors, pre-supposes that the latter are likewise alive to the responsibilities attached to their sacred office. If the people are exhorted to esteem their spiritual instructors very highly, it is "for their work's sake." The attachment of the people must, therefore, owe its continuance to the faithfulness and devotedness of those who are set over them in the Lord; and it is evident that where such qualifications are wanting, the tie of affection must be loosened. My remarks, however, do not apply to such a case. The charge of neglect or inattention to the duties of their office, certainly applies less to the ministers of our body generally, than to any other sect of Christian teachers with which we are acquainted—our opponents themselves being judges.

I am quite aware that in stating my opinion of the existence of a want of due respect among some of our people for the sacred office, I am bringing forward a charge of no common magnitude; and it is with much regret that I feel compelled conscientiously to do so. I am aware, too, that I am open to the retort—"Why, if your ministers are such as you describe, does it happen that any of their people should be found capable of holding them in such slight estimation?" It is certainly not very easy to account for so unnatural a course of conduct. I may, however, be permitted to mention some circumstances which may unhappily have concurred to produce this lamentable feeling.

1. The proneness of not a few among us to rest in mere excitement, to the neglect of the requirements of self-examination and the careful perusal of the Holy Scriptures, may, by its tendency to antinomianism, have led some to a dis-

regard of personal and practical duties. If the word of God be neglected, the mind is left an easy prey to an evil influence from without; and in such a case, it is quite hopeless to expect that the relative duties incumbent on us as Christians will be kept in their due harmony and consistence.

2. The state of political feeling in the country, for the last few years, may also have tended not a little to foster a spirit of independence and a dislike for all subordination and control. The levelling spirit which has now set in—unless Divine Providence avert—threatens to hurry us on headlong into the wildest vortex of democracy. In the effort to escape what was deemed the Scylla of undue aristocratical influence, we are in no small danger of dashing against the Charybdis of democratical violence; which, if experience is to be trusted, is infinitely more to be dreaded than the exposure to any evils resulting from the control of a few. That the professors of religion should, in such a period of excitement, have escaped unscathed from this collision of opinion and party feeling was hardly to be expected. The minds of men are now bent on change. The prevalent idea seems to be, “any change is for the better; our ancestors were all in the wrong—their notions have become obsolete. All our institutions, civil and ecclesiastical, must be new-modelled; all who oppose such views are the enemies of improvement, and should be treated as such.”

If there be any two principles for the regulation of conduct in our holy religion more distinctly marked than others, they will perhaps be found in these:—1. “Meddle not with them who are given to change;” “be content with such things as ye have.”—2. The second is, the duty of subordination as applied to every relation of life. Our Almighty Parent has in his wisdom ordained that the welfare of his human family shall depend on the maintenance of a due subordination between its various portions and members. To enumerate scripture authorities in illustration of this position would be to quote no inconsiderable portion of the sacred volume. A desire, therefore, of change, *for the sake of change*, and an impatience of control, are at direct variance with the spirit and design of the gospel.

3. Another cause of the diminution of respect from the people to their ministers may be found in the obstacles presented, especially in large towns, to a constant system of pastoral visitation. The preaching “from house to house,” which St. Paul recommended, not only by precept, but by example, is second only (if indeed it be second), in importance, to the regular public ministration of the word; but in towns so densely populated as Liverpool, the practice to any considerable extent is clogged with serious difficulties; so that, a preacher, however anxious to perform every part of his pastoral office, can, in this instance only, hope to arrive at something like an approximation to it. The difficulty, too, is enhanced by the onerous duties connected with an attention on the part of the preacher to the outworks and the practical application of the machinery of the Methodist economy. A cruel necessity this! If any plan could be devised to exonerate them in part from this responsibility, and afford them more time for the pastoral work of visiting the members at their own houses, a most important end would be gained, and the spiritual profit of the people greatly promoted.

Such, Mr. Editor, are the views that have presented themselves to me in attempting to trace the causes of our unhappy divisions. In the present heated state of the minds of those who have mixed themselves up with this agitation, there is little hope that calm and dispassionate reasoning will obtain much attention. Reflection, however, will, I trust, in time come to the aid of not a few who now think that in promoting strife they are doing God service. As to the ultimate result of the present discussions, I have no fear. Storms serve to clear the atmosphere; and Divine Providence will ultimately make even “the wrath of man to praise Him.” The tempest may produce temporary devastation; and the violence of misguided men may, for a time, be attended with consequences injurious to themselves and others; but peace and harmony will succeed both, and the apparently untoward events which we now witness, be overruled for a more extended diffusion of the gospel of our Redeemer among men.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

A WESLEYAN METHODIST LAYMAN

Liverpool, 1st July, 1835.

DIVISION OR NO DIVISION?—THAT IS THE QUESTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—The article in the *Lantern* with the above title is well worthy of its pages, and is fully entitled to the commendation of Sir Andrew Ague Cheek's challenge,

“Exceeding good sense less.”

“There shall not be a division.” Why? Because, “*adhesion to the body is the first principle of the Association.*” But there are other first principles, as well as the boasted

one of the Association. For instance, the first principle of house-breakers, pick-pockets, and other depredators is "adhesion to the body" politic; and they, equally with the Association, evince their "sincerity," by evading the grasp of the constable—the durance of the jail—and the salubrious air of New South Wales—as long as they can; endeavouring to prevent a "division" of themselves from their more honest countrymen, who heartily wish to get rid of them, by every means in their power, by forged "fac-similes," &c. Now, the "first principle" of good order is, that such persons shall not adhere to the community, however *sincere* their intention of so doing may appear; but that "there shall be a division," and if "the means used" by the police and other good subjects are not sufficient "to ensure the transportation of these rogues," it is because of the superior skill (not a word about honesty) of their opponents, the rogues, in preventing it. The following dialogue is in point:—

Judge—Prisoner, what have you to say, as your crime is *notorious*, and has been *proved*, why sentence of transportation should not be passed upon you?

Prisoner—My Lord, "there shall be no division—there need be no division." I am sure there need not, and I am sincere in saying it; for I belong to an Association of persons like myself; and the *first principle* of that Association is, that none of us, for any offence are to be transported; but are to continue adhering to British society.

Judge—I am to be regulated, in my decisions, by the *law*, which knows nothing of your Association or its first principles; and, therefore, there "shall be a division" of your person from well-ordered society, for the term of 14 years, or for life, as the case may be.

In like manner, the preachers cannot, ought not, to regard the first principles of the redoubted, anti-Methodistical, and inconsistent Association. The Associates may be pledged to them; but the preachers are no parties to them; nor will they ever be.—They are bound to attend to the first principles of Methodistical law and usage; both of which say, "there must be—there is a division!"

Again. In a large ship, suppose an Association were formed among some of the crew, with the "Doctor" at their head, to oppose all discipline—to disobey orders—to demolish the rigging—to throw the guns and ammunition into the sea—and to scuttle the vessel—*declaring* that their only object was the safety of the crew. As soon as such an Association was discovered, the "first principle" of those who had the charge of the ship, would be to get all its members overboard, either into the water, on the nearest land, or, if the Association could make one, upon a raft of *boards hired for six months*. Nor would the plea avail—our first principle is to stay on board, come what will. No! Common sense, and the *first principle* of nature, self preservation, would cause its instant rejection; and it would be carried by the acclamation of all honest seamen—"there shall be a division;" or there will be a *wreck*. And are the preachers who are left in charge of the interests of Methodism tamely to allow the Association to revolutionize and "ruin" those interests?—Certainly not! They say, and they ought to say to such persons—"there shall be a division;" and there is *no question* about it.

Or, a number of persons profess to be British soldiers; but they will not submit to the established discipline of the army—they lavish systematic, foul, and false abuse on their officers, calling them "Tyrants," and endeavour, in every way, to excite mutiny; and all this on pretence of reforming the army and making it more effective. Well, as a matter of course, and as the most *con amore* proceeding, they get turned, perhaps drummed, out of the barrack. This done, they instantly set up a shout—"there is no division, and there shall be no division." Our *first principle* is, adhesion to the army; and, as a proof of our sincerity, we have built a wooden tabernacle, and our uniform is the same as that worn by our old comrades, "in order that in *appearance* there shall be no more difference than cannot be avoided." Rare honesty to be sure! But with *such* a set, what upright or sensible man would march through Coventry?

An individual is afflicted with a painful and dangerous complaint; or, perhaps, a corn on his toe, or a decayed tooth. He sends for his medical attendant, and they agree, that as the "first principle" of the ailment is "adhesion to the body," so that *is the strongest reason* why powerful medicine or surgical aid should *instantly* be resorted to, that the evil may be eradicated before it undermines, irreparably injures, or brings the constitution to the verge of ruin." That there must be a division if health is to be restored, is a settled matter; and if either the patient or his attendant were to cry out doubtfully, "Division or no division?—That is the question," the other would instantly pronounce, that the querist and common sense had dissolved partnership. Has not the highest legal authority declared, that the present commotion affected the *existence* of the Methodist connexion? And, if so, was it not imperative upon the guar-

dians of the system to say, "there shall be a division?"—Certainly! And no person but one labouring under the Warren *mania*, will come to any other conclusion.

In a word, the whole article is at variance with *common sense* and *honesty*; under the influence of which valuable qualifications "the Conference party have declared in favour of a division; what has produced the infatuation" of the Association which dictates the whole of their Quixotic course, I shall not stop to inquire; I mention the fact, and your readers may draw their own conclusions; but do not suffer these dividers and destroyers of the Lord's people to saddle the awful responsibility on other shoulders."

OMEGA.

HORSE JOCKEYISM; OR, "MEN SINGULARLY FITTED FOR GREAT ACTIONS."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Mr. Editor—Perceiving that one of the most splendid pages of your admirable periodical, is that which records the valorous deeds of the illustrious worthies to whom your motto refers, I send the following facts as peculiarly deserving *illumination*; and if, when you have heard his exploits, you think my hero deserves so exalted an honour, pray do him the justice to place him at the head of your select list. I will quote the words of my informant, that you may be assured of the correctness of the statement. It is another specimen of that want of rectitude of principle and conduct, which so markedly characterises that most distinguished junto—that fractious fraternity—the "Association."

"If you have no objection, I will give you a specimen of the spirit by which the Agitators in this part of the country (Camelford, Cornwall), are actuated. They have been for some time endeavouring to get the circuit-horse from the preacher (Mr. Barber). The horse was subscribed for by nineteen individuals; one not a hundred miles from Barn Park, Boscastle, and two in Camelford, sent a written demand to Mr. Barber for the horse. Mr. B., of course, paid no attention to it; when a message was sent from the Boscastle gentleman to this effect: that as Mr. B. had committed himself to the law, the law should take its course, if he did not surrender the horse. Poor Mr. B. was at a loss to know how he had committed himself, and disregarded the threat. By and bye, however, the secret was out. It appears that by some mistake or other, the pastoral address of the Rev. Thos. Martin to the Camelford society was issued without the printer's name. There is a penalty of £20 per copy to be exacted from all who shall publish or distribute any papers under such circumstances. Mr. B., ignorant of this fact, distributed the address as freely as possible. Last week, a message was sent him from the "great man" to the effect, that if he did not give up the horse, an information would be laid against him for having distributed four copies within the last four months, and a penalty of £80 inflicted."

This is certainly a very novel and *brief* mode of *unhorsing* a man! One really would not suppose that a poor circuit-horse could be so very enviable a possession, for we know that, like his brother in the mill, he can, in general, but just manage to go his round, leaving his rider ample opportunity to indulge his meditations; or, if he choose by way of amusement, to pluck blackberries from the hedges. To be sure, we did once hear of a worn-out hunter who came in his old age to ecclesiastical preferment, suddenly galloping off at the sound of the horn, and joining in the chase with a pair of huge saddle-bags banging his bare sides, to the indelible merriment of the huntsmen, and the utter dismay and confusion of the preacher, who cut as ludicrous a figure as John Gilpin himself, whose reasons for his appearance he might aptly have adopted, "I came, because my horse would come;" but this is a solitary instance of spirit in a circuit-horse, and is only an illustration of the "ruling passion strong in death."—But let us not mistake the capabilities of the Camelford steed. Little did our hero think, as he vaulted triumphantly on the back of this poor Rosinante, that he had mounted a Pegasus which would convey him in a trice from Land's End to Liverpool. We premise that this gentleman has never before been beyond his own locality. Now we know, Mr. Editor, that there is nothing like travelling to give expansion to the mind; and, since he is arrived, I hope you will do your utmost to *illuminate* him; and give him more just, liberal, and comprehensive views of things; and, above all, advise him to attempt no more feats of horsemanship, seeing that he may be carried farther and faster than he intends, to the hazard of wind and limb; or, in other words, if he wish to maintain any respectability of character, to abstain, for the future, from a course of procedure so mean and dishonourable, as will only serve to procure him a disgraceful notoriety. Apologizing for the liberty of these suggestions, I am, yours, &c.

Liverpool, June 30.

Y. Z.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—It will be in the recollection of many of your readers that the venerable Dr. Clarke was scarcely gathered to his fathers, when a certain party scattered his ashes to the winds of heaven, for the purpose of spreading pestilence among that body to which he was so long, so honourably, and so affectionately attached. That party, it seems, is not dead; and as they profess so much veneration for his opinions and conduct, I thought that, at the present moment, it might serve a cause on which, were he living, he would not be silent, to send for insertion in your very needful periodical a few of his opinions, which are of a somewhat better authority than those on which the men that “love darkness rather than light”—whether in a *Lantern* or out of it—seem disposed to lay more stress than the Doctor would approve. Indeed, those who have read the preface to his “*Life*,” published by his family, cannot but know that nothing is more severely denounced, both by him and his biographers, than collecting his deliberate opinions on any subject even from his ordinary written correspondence, much less from the baseless stories on which it has been attempted to erect an anti-Wesleyan battering-ram under the sanction of his authority.

Great horror has been excited, and much noise is made, about the dominion of a few eminent men in a Theological Institution; and the better to answer the effect intended to be produced, they have been “supposed to be possessed of certain *episcopal propensities*,” and classed with the most arbitrary of the prelates of modern times, and the Popes, and even the Jesuits of the darkest ages. Sir, I heartily despise this rhetorical special pleading, whether it appear in Sir C. W. in a Court of Chancery, or in the demagogues of the “Grand Central Association.” “Misery,” by the bye, “makes strange bed-fellows.” Uncharitable suppositions, hard names, and special pleading, were not the weapons with which Wesley fought his battles; and that Dr. Clarke was not to be terrified by mere names, is evident from the following extract from his letter to “Messrs. Dr. Emory and others, of the Methodist Episcopal church,” under date of the 6th of February 1832. In this letter he remarks, “I respect, I wish well to your state, and I love your church. As far as I can discern, you are close imitators of the *original Methodists* (than whom a greater blessing has not been given to the British nation since the reformation)—holding the same doctrines, and acting under the same discipline; therefore have you prospered as we have prospered.”—*Life*, vol. 3, p. 363. The Doctor then urges them to abide by their characteristic simplicity; and that this would not be risked in Theological Institutions, in his estimation, is evident from the fact that he knew they had long had such institutions among them, and that he directed their attention to the cultivation of “learning,” as well as of simplicity. This is also evident from his letter to Mr. Butterworth, in favour of such an establishment among the English Methodists, as long since as 1806. Dr. Clarke, therefore, was not horrified at the bare idea of “*certain episcopal propensities*,” the mere creations of his own fancy; he actually “loved” an existing “*Methodist Episcopal Church*,” and in this church he saw “*the close imitators of the original Methodists*.”

Again; let us hear him as to the *purity and efficiency of modern English Methodism*. In one of his visits to the land of his birth, while he was president, he found some heart-burnings in Belfast; and the following entry is made in his journal:—

“In the evening, I had a meeting with the preachers, stewards, and several of our principal friends, together with almost all the leaders, male and female; and endeavoured to set them right on matters on which they had got very uneasy. It was a very solemn and affecting time; and I believe all were determined to leave minor matters and considerations, and strive together for the hope of the gospel—laying themselves out more abundantly to bring sinners to God. On one proposing the question to me—‘Is Methodism what it has been?’—I answered it in a way very different from what was, I believe, expected and intended by it. ‘No! it is more rational—more stable—more consistent—more holy—more useful to the community—and a greater blessing to the world at large.’ And all this I found no difficulty in proving.”—pp. 50, 51.

Lastly; let us consider the testimonies given of his latest intercourse with the “popes” and “tyrants” of modern Methodism, in his last interview with them as a Conference, but a few weeks before his lamented decease. His “*Life*” sufficiently proves that he went to the Conference of 1832 under the influence of feelings powerfully excited by his appointment of the preceding year; but the result of his intercourse with his brethren is thus stated by his son in his Appendix to his *Life*. They were taking a walk together, and he remarks—“Having nothing particularly gratifying in the surrounding prospect to engage his thoughts, he seemed to turn with the greater delight to recollections of past scenes—dwelling with great pleasure and much affection on the universally kind feeling shown him by his brethren at the Conference. This was a subject to which he often recurred, and expressed his thankfulness to God that he had been enabled to meet the preachers, and that the meeting was such as to be remem-

bered with the utmost gratification; indeed, he several times *abruptly* introduced a mention of the joy he felt, which clearly proved what great hold the circumstance possessed in his mind."—P. 461.

It was at this Conference that he wrote in an album, presented to him by the Rev. R. Newstead, the following deliberate testimony of his sincere attachment to both the doctrines and discipline of Methodism, as at present administered:—"From a long and thorough knowledge of the subject, I am led most conscientiously to conclude, that Christianity itself as existing among those called Wesleyan Methodists, is the purest, the safest, that which is most for God's glory, and the benefit of mankind; and that both as to the creed there professed, the form of discipline there established, and the consequent moral practice there vindicated. And I believe, that among them is found the best form and body of divinity that has ever existed in the church of Christ, from the promulgation of Christianity to the present day." And as though he were determined to put it out of the power of any one to slander his memory, and quote his authority against the Conference, he wrote the following brief letter "on the back of a copy of the stations which he sent from Liverpool to a friend in London:"—

"THE CONFERENCE IS GREAT AND GLORIOUS, has done its work almost, and cannot exist longer than Monday. See what a roving commission they have given me!—I am, my dear friend,

"Yours affectionately, ADAM CLARKE.

"August 5th, 1832."

I met with this letter accidentally in an odd number of a defunct periodical for September 8th, 1832, where it may be found at page 343, with the *autograph imitated*. I would advise those who plead the Doctor's opinion *against* the Conference, and *spare no pains* to obtain it, to inquire diligently after the original letter; to get it lithographed, framed, and glazed, and hung up in their houses, and to look at it until it has shamed them into common honesty on the subject. After this, Sir, let us hear no more posthumous slander from the admirers of Dr. Adam Clarke.

PHILAGATHOS.

FUTILE ATTEMPT OF THE CENTRAL ASSOCIATION AT WIGAN.

"Parturiunt montes; nascetur ridiculus mus."

They who are vainly attempting to turn the Methodist part of the world upside down, have thought proper to send forth an agent to inflict a visit on the peaceable Wigan circuit; and we shall not hesitate to inform our readers of the *honourable* means employed to effect their purpose, and also of the issue of their scheme. Although Wigan is in the immediate vicinity of the two leading dissentient towns, it has remained unaffected, in any material degree, by their levelling and unconstitutional proceedings. A few weeks ago a sapient Solon arrived from Manchester, as we understand, in order to *get up* a public meeting in the above-mentioned town; to enlighten the Wesleyan Methodists in regard to their wrongs; to exhibit to their astonishment the iron chains which they had been long unconsciously wearing; and to bid them, with irresistible eloquence, make themselves free! This agent of the Association being, as it would appear, unacquainted with the Wigan Methodists, thought it advisable to *pay a visit to the postmaster to inquire whether there were any persons who took in the Christian Advocate*, concluding, no doubt, that if he could only meet with some readers of that notorious paper, they would have imbibed its principles, and be ready to second his plans. Having received the necessary information, he directed his steps to the house of a political radical close by, one of whose characteristics is a dislike to Methodism *as it is*, though he himself is neither a member of society, an attendant at the chapel, nor so far as we can learn, even a professor of religion. To the congratulations, the smiles, and the delights manifested at the meeting of these two patriots we are, of course, perfect strangers; but the effect was soon apparent in a visitation of those individuals to such as might possibly be induced to come forward to take the chair, and defend their endangered constitution. Alas! strange to tell, the proffered honor was universally declined! The leaders, the stewards, the trustees, the local preachers, were unwilling to patronise such a meeting; and it cannot be ascertained either that a single member has been secured to the Association, or that any encouragement was given to the friends of liberty, as they choose to be called. The scheme evinced a serpent-like sagacity; but it availed not against the bulwark of Christian principle. The sympathising visitor went from house to house to feel the pulse of the leading characters in the church, but finding the beat was healthy and vigorous, he was unable to pass off his potent medicines. What subsequently became of this Doctor of a broken constitution we cannot learn—whether he returned, as Dr. Warren might perhaps facetiously say, to "his own place," and determined to remain quietly at home—or whether he

has prosecuted his labours of love in other parts we know not; but if this exposure meet his eye, we would humbly take upon us to advise him, when destitute of other introduction, *to pursue his present commendable and sagacious plan of paying a visit to the post-office*; and when cast down for want of suitable encouragement, we would strenuously exhort him to reflect for a moment on his noble exploits in the town of Wigan!

But to be serious. It may be added that the contributions to the Mission Fund in this circuit are this year a considerable advance upon those of the preceding, and that the Missionary meeting which has lately been held in Wigan was characterised by a delightful harmony of feeling. The yearly collection also, that test of waverers, was found in the district meeting recently held in Liverpool, to be an increase upon that of last year, *practically proving that the friends of the old cause have abjured the democratic resolution to stop the supplies!*

W.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—At a time when Dr. Warren and a number of other ambitious and disappointed men are, with a ruthless zeal, endeavouring to agitate the Wesleyan connexion from its centre to its circumference; and, under the pretext of effecting a reformation, are labouring to devastate the fairest and most flourishing section of the Christian church; it becomes the duty of every lover of genuine piety, to “come up to the help of the Lord.” And hence, though I am not the occupant of any office in the church of God, I feel induced, by your leave, to fill a place in your phalanx. I consider the fell principle of this unhallowed course of agitation to be the political mania of a spurious liberality which equally animates the avowed infidel and the professed Christian, and constitutes to a considerable extent the “hobby-horse” of the age in which we live. The evil of this principle and the ruinous effects of which it is productive, must be manifest to every calm and impartial beholder. It is a strange kind of tyranny which man exercises over his fellow, when the victims of it are insensible of its existence. And yet the “Central Association,” in its warfare upon social order and Christian feeling, assumes—nay, ventures to assert, this; and on the same ground urges the importance of agitation in order to accomplish its unworthy object. A short time ago, the pioneers connected with this warfare came to a circuit town in this county, and endeavoured to conjure up a public meeting, in order to disturb the harmony and prosperity of an excellent and peaceful society; but the person to whom they made application, to his lasting honour, assured them that he would have nothing to do with their cause, and stated that the society was in a peaceable and prosperous condition, and it would be cruel (he might have added, *extremely wicked*), to disturb its quiet; and they were obliged to leave the town without effecting their purpose. We need only refer to the effect of this system of agitation upon individual piety, in order to ascertain its turpitude. I have plainly and pointedly asked more than one of those who are favourable to Dr. Warren’s proceedings—“Is it as well with you in spiritual things now as it was before you turned your attention to these subjects? Are you as holy and happy now as you were before you listened to these men?” And the answer has uniformly been—“No!” generally accompanied with a sigh. And the answer must be “no,” if the sacred scriptures are to be the rule of judgment; for if we form our estimate of the spirit and temper of these agitators from the speeches which they deliver, and the publications which they circulate; the conclusion to which we are forced is, that they are as far removed from the mind of Christ, and as diametrically opposed to the mild temper of the gospel, as we can possibly conceive men to be who lay any claim to Christian truth. In some of the letters which have been published, an attempt is made to account for the declarations which have proceeded from some of the circuits in favour of “Methodism as it is,” by stating that they either have been, or now are dependant upon the Conference funds for assistance. This certainly proves that these circuits rightly estimate the benefits they have received, and are not guilty of the sin of ingratitude. But what shall we say of some of those circuits which have been madly endeavouring to “cut off all supplies,” and yet have been dependant for thirty years upon the Contingent Fund? Several cases might be selected from the circuits which are said to have sent delegates to the late meeting at Manchester; we will for the present notice one, viz. the Carlisle circuit; from which came a Mr. T. J. Cox—whether he was appointed by the quarterly meeting, the local preachers’ meeting, or by a leaders’ meeting, I know not; but as an asterisk is not affixed to his name, I naturally conclude that he was LEGALLY appointed, and not like some others in that heterogeneous assembly—*self-elected*. By referring to the Minutes of Conference, I find that Carlisle was made a distinct circuit in 1801; from which time to the year 1832,

it received assistance from the Contingent Fund, every year without any exception. The total amount which this circuit has obtained, since its formation, is £2521 17s 4d!! viz.—for what in the Minutes of Conference are designated, “ordinary deficiencies,” £2384 5s 6d, and for “extraordinary deficiencies,” £137 11s 10d. While in the whole time that it has been a circuit, up to the Conference of 1834, Carlisle has raised to the Contingent Fund, by yearly subscription £358 3s 5d, and by July collection, £88 17s 4d; making a total of £447 0s 9d! Thus this circuit has received £2074 16s 7d from this fund more than it has paid into it! We will now turn to another fund from which they have endeavoured to cut off the supplies; viz., the Chapel Fund. By referring to the reports, I find that the Carlisle circuit has raised £133 19s 11d, by collections for this fund since its establishment in 1818. While the trustees of the Carlisle chapel alone have received from it a total amount of £732!! Yes, sir, those very trustees, who on the 25th of last March, in opposition to the wish of the superintendent, held a meeting in the said chapel for the formation of a branch of the “Grand Central Association,” have received £598 0s 1d from the Chapel Fund more than the circuit has ever paid into it. A circuit which has received from two of the funds of Wesleyan Methodism £2672 16s 8d more than it has ever paid into them, heartily engages in a system, one principle object of which is to destroy those very funds by “cutting off the supplies.” This is the circuit which complains of the tyranny of the Conference; this is the circuit which asserts that “peace has existed too long;” these are the people who declare that they will “submit no longer to the yoke of despotism!” O tempora! O mores! While we contemplate this precious specimen of the materials of which the “Grand Central Association” is composed, we are naturally induced to ask, whither is gratitude—whither is common justice—whither is heathen honesty—fled?—I am, &c.
Cheshire, May 29th, 1835. ALIQUIS.

ONE OF THE MEN “SINGULARLY FITTED FOR GREAT ACTIONS.”

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—I had often heard of these wonderful men, and was somewhat anxious to see one of them, that I might, if possible, learn how they managed to secure such singular greatness. Truly great actions are certainly things to which we may all very laudably aspire; and it is, therefore, natural to ask how *may* a man be best fitted for such actions? A short time ago, one of the Association delegates visited Tarporley, in the Chester circuit, for the purpose, I suppose, of letting us plain Cheshire folks into the secret, and we stared like men suddenly awakened by the watchman springing his rattle. On his journey to this place, the *holy* crusader availed himself of almost every inn on the road, until the numerous “little drops” aroused, and made a mighty man of him—“singularly fitted for great actions.” Thus inspired, he became valiant for the truth, and his fellow-passengers, long anxious to know who and what he was, at length learnt that Methodist preachers and the Methodist Conference were the objects against whom he was arming himself.

On the Sunday evening, our *pious* reformer attended the Methodist chapel, and behaved himself quite as indecorously as circumstances and the law would allow, often responding to the minister, with an air of contempt, and in a manner evidently designed to attract attention, to the great annoyance of all who sat near him. At the close of the service, a prayer meeting was announced, and a verse or two given out by the preacher; upon which the stranger immediately rushed forward towards the communion table, and with “singular” impudence and irreverence took the lead of the meeting. All present were astonished, and looked one at another as if thunder-struck, not being prepared, poor souls, for so *great an action*. Now you must understand, Mr. Editor, that through the instrumentality of the Methodist preachers, God is graciously performing a good work in our neighbourhood: the society is in great peace, and many souls have recently been brought to a knowledge of the truth; a spirit of prayer rests upon the people, and numbers who formerly indulged strong prejudices against Methodism have lately become regular hearers. This spirited and, of course, respectable representative of the “Grand Central Association” could, therefore, make no way amongst us; consequently, after sneaking about for a day or two, like another snake in the grass, and unsuccessfully trying various schemes to secure a lodgment in some of the dirty corners of our old town, he returned to Banbridge, in the Nantwich circuit, and being there joined by an equally zealous companion, engaged in a “singularly great action,” not far from the public house. Happily, the peace of society, even there, has not been very seriously broken; but *this was not his fault*.

The above is merely designed as a friendly hint; but should this Puritan trouble us again, I shall probably furnish you with his name at full length. I have two or three

other notables in my eye, belonging to a neighbouring circuit, whose Association zeal is red hot, and rapidly bringing them within the range of a flash. It is not unlikely but we may enable you, by and bye, to throw a few rays upon them also, being pretty well acquainted with their importance in the scale of society. It may be enough at present to observe, that they promise fair for becoming capital customers to the Dudley delegate. This *ci devant* divine is, doubtless, making his scheme pay well—the transcendent excellency of his spirit being strongly recommended throughout the country. When the priest himself turns gin-seller, no one can wonder that his adherents should be gin-drinkers. And I find that the instances alluded to above are by no means solitary ones. Having occasion, a week or two ago, to call upon one of the principal officers of the Association in Manchester, a friend of mine found him well charged with *something more than Warrenism*—though with that he was sufficiently intoxicated to render him *rather foolish*. Now if this “Grand” assemblage of wise men and orators will make their boast of such characters, truth and justice require that they should at least be *illuminated*, that the world may really know how much they have to expect from them.

OBSERVER.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE ASSOCIATION DOES NOT INTEND TO SUBMIT TO THE NEW TESTAMENT.—The following expressions are selected from a great number more of the same kind, and all contained in a recent single Number of the *Lantern*. Of the preachers it is said, “their depraved appetite for every species of filthy slander and coarse abuse has been sufficiently demonstrated.” “No difference of opinion can exist as to the impudence, folly, and barbarity,” of the “lawless and tyrannical proceedings sanctioned by the Conference.” “The preachers *always say one thing and mean another*.” “When it is thought convenient to expel an unoffending member, the cause assigned is *never* the true one.” “The Conference would equal Rome itself in the spirit of persecution.” Their “maxim is—divide and destroy.” A highwayman is an honourable man when compared with “the Conference party in this town.” “We ‘could a tale unfold’ of several instances of this assassin-like conduct.” In the preachers “there is no squeamish hesitation, no remains of pity or compassion; but, ‘like a staunch murderer, steady to his purpose,’ they urge on their cruel course; and leave behind them nothing but the sighs of the wounded spirit, and the cries of injured innocence.” “That is just the case with you preachers, you are just like highwaymen. If you can bring me down alone you will; but, if not, you call in two or three more of your companions, and then you may rob and murder me. That is just what the *majority* of you are.” “The Conference have done the devil’s work just as the devil wished.” Yet the organs of the Association say, “there is no division—and there shall be no division” But if they believe half of their own statements they have left themselves no choice as to the course to be pursued. That has been settled by an authority from which there lies no appeal. “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye *withdraw yourselves* from every brother that walketh disorderly,” and surely it is disorderly to be just like highwaymen and murderers, and to “do the devil’s work.” No; say the Association, though we affirm that the preachers are “disorderly,” doing the work of Satan himself, yet we will neither “withdraw” from them, nor even suffer them to withdraw from us, for ‘there needs no division, and there shall be no division,’ and, though Paul may recommend it, “superior skill,” will be shown in preventing it.”

The Association not so bad as they could wish.—The preachers are charged with “denying to Christian men the tokens of the love of their dying Lord, and closing the doors of the lovefeast to them.”—For the members of the Association do not think their characters complete, unless they be consummated by “ineffable hypocrisy,” and, therefore, all this bad and bitter feeling—all these foul and abusive words they wish to be connected with a profession, made in the use of these holy ordinances, of their great and special “love” and “charity” towards the men of whom they deem it their duty to say all these tremendously awful things.

The Association mean to insult the whole body of the preachers—“if they can.”—Here follows an account of the treatment of two preachers, by J. Gordon, and the “leaders” who are the ecclesiastical patrons of his gin-shop.* A meeting was called for the purpose of trying two men, who were charged with having broken Methodist law. In the first place, the *Lantern* says there were, “about a thousand people in the chapel, when it was near eleven o’clock;” how many there might be at the beginning we are not told. Though there was a “great rush” at the vestry door, yet we are assured it was “not a mob,” as some of the most respectable persons in the place were there, including some dissenting ministers, who, conceiving themselves to be members of the Methodist leaders’ meeting, had come, it seems, to see justice done. The superintendent wished to have the vestry door closed. “You had better close it yourself, Sir,” said some of the *respectable* persons near it. He attempted to give out a hymn, but it

* To this statement we beg to direct the special attention of our readers, as it is the first application of the great principle laid down by the delegates, namely—the right of *popular interference* in all the affairs of the church, and was doubtless intended to be a practical exemplification of the thing, by its great mover and author.

being a time for *popular interference*, "this was resisted by several persons; they earnestly entreated him not to commit the mockery of singing and praying on such an occasion." "It was then determined that Mr. Lester, a man of *great determination of character*, should go into the chair," and he, nothing loth, said to the preacher, "Now, Sir, I am Chairman; and shall keep you in order as well as the rest." Even the heart of the gin-seller was softened when he beheld the condition of these degraded and insulted ministers of Christ. "I never saw two men placed in such a pitiable situation, and hope I never shall again." However, his obduracy speedily returned, and he went on to say that the "preachers were just like highwaymen" and pick-pockets. At length one of the preachers, thinking he had staid long enough, and we think much too long, wishing to retire, was led through the crowd, "as a little child, receiving some personal indignities," from the *respectable* persons present, which, says the dram-seller, "I was sorry for," feeling, it would seem, something like compunction, a second time. The other preacher "sat for nearly three quarters of an hour, looking at the table, one and another person (*respectable*, of course), making observations, and *calling him all things indifferent*." Finally, "a meeting of the whole circuit was called on the following Friday, when a resolution was proposed, that the circuit, from that moment should *WITHHOLD ALL SUPPORT* from the two preachers in question." No sooner said than done; "we have since met the classes regularly, and the money that is collected will be devoted to the trustees." It is added, "we told Mr. Edwards that we should not place ourselves under the lash of the law, by interfering with the chapels." Indeed! We thought the principle laid down was the right of popular interference in *all* the affairs of the church. However, it seems an exception is to be made in favour of the chapels. They have had quite enough of law, at least, till the *millstone* is removed. Mr. Rowe will derive either comfort or something else from the fact, that, in the opinion of such men as these, "his conduct has been exemplary." From these facts, it would appear, that *popular interference* with ministers means, in plain English, offering them all kinds of insult and indignity; and then dooming them to starvation; and all this without even the form of a trial. These too are the exploits of men who say they are in slavery, what they will do when invested with freedom, we cannot even guess. But the poor hare and the hounds are not to be separated just yet; for the organs of the Association say, "there is no division, there need be no division, and there shall be no division." Doubtless, it is already determined, in due time, to make every preacher who happens to offend, submit to the same ceremony—subject, of course, to J. Gordon's memorable provision, that is—if they can.

The Association are determined to have no division, although they have made one themselves.—The ceremony performed at Dudley was prepared and intended for the superintendent of the Liverpool North circuit. He was to be insulted, expelled, and what not; and then, as the *Lantern* has it, to sit nearly three quarters of an hour, looking at the table, one and another person making observations, and calling him all things indifferent. Yet, whatever he and his friends might do, there was to be no division, because of the superior skill of their opponents in preventing it. A minister of the gospel was to spend his time in squabbles with a set of jurors who were so utterly unprincipled, that, with deliberation and of set purpose, they were first eager to return a verdict *before* hearing a single tittle of the evidence, and then *after* they had heard it, would return no verdict at all; and, finally, determined that the question, guilty or not guilty, should not even be submitted to their consideration. Then these idle contests were to be reported in the *Lantern* from week to week, of course, to the disadvantage of the preacher, and thus he, like another Sampson, was to be made to tread the stage and to make sport for the Philistines. If ever a servant of God owed a duty to his Master, it was to bring such a temple of Dagon about the ears of its constructors. When, therefore, he was kindly set at liberty by being voted out of the chair, he determined, in return for such an act of mercy, to put an end to all the wrongs and grievances of the complainers, by whom he was surrounded, by giving them no farther trouble. When St. Paul was rejected by the Jews, he turned to the Gentiles. We don't know that any of these unbelieving Jews ever said that he could not possibly tell what was the reason why he was not a member of the Christian church. But we do know that Barns, of the White Lion, did say to the good people of Warrington, that he could not possibly tell, or even conceive, the reason why he and some of his friends had been expelled from the society. They certainly ought to have known, for it was their own act and deed.—Most assuredly he was never expelled while the preacher was in the chair. Barns himself was his immediate successor in that office, and ought to be able to account for what happened under his own administration. If he really cannot solve this knotty point, he must ask some of his friends "what can possibly be the reason why a man's hands and feet should die after he has cut off his own head?" Or when a Methodist preacher has been insulted and formally rejected by a set of men, and he choose to leave them and to go to others who receive and treat him more kindly—and moreover resolve to stand by him, and to have nothing more to do with the unruly people by whom he has been expelled—why and how it is that a division should actually take place, although the *Lantern* says, "there is no division—there need be no division—and there shall be no division." As this is something of a mystery, we shall not attempt to unravel it ourselves; but leave it to the *superior skill* of the men who are "singularly fitted for great actions" to set the mind of the wondering publican at rest.

The members of the Association are resolved to live in church fellowship with the people who will have nothing to do with them.—There shall be no division say the members of the "Grand Central."—Not to travel far from home, at present, do they suppose that the high minded and really respectable Methodists, of Liverpool, are prepared, at once, to unite in Christian fellowship with the leaders of that unrighteous confederacy, called the Association? These noble people have not yet learned to make lying a virtue. The members of the Association may talk with complacency of the tickets they have

issued being "a fac-simile" of those issued by the preachers, and tell us that it is a singular proof of their love to old Methodism. Men of honourable minds look with abhorrence upon the whole affair.—Teaching all sorts of people to make their way into lovefeasts, and to the Lord's table, with a lie in their right hand, is a rather serious thing. Those who hope to be separated from common liars hereafter, will not hastily unite, even here, with those who are "singularly fitted for great actions" in that line. And what "honest man can be connected" with a set of people who have been compelled to disgorge £18 8s 4d of public money, after having "unanimously resolved" not to apply it to the purposes for which it had been put into their hands? It may, indeed, be convenient to some persons to forget the Leeds-street society's book, but others will remember it: whether returned or not, it has illustrated the characters of the men who took it away. As book stealing and purse stealing both proceed from the same principle, should these gentry ever come into the Methodist society, the honest people *must* go out. "So there is a division, there must be a division, and there shall be a division."

Whether the Sunderland tale be true or false is of no public importance. "*Dr. Warren's friend*" says he was admitted to the company and confidence of Mr. Vint and a Methodist preacher—that he heard these two persons exchange an observation—that he has kept the thing in his heart during some half-dozen years—and that he takes the present opportunity of showing his real character, by lodging a dagger in the bowels of each of them, for Solomon says, "the words of a tale bearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly." During these days of reform, we must attend to Jeremiah's advice, "take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother."

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TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

No. 15. LIVERPOOL, JULY 22, 1835. Price 1½d.

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In our vulgar and common-sense notions, the term they have applied to themselves—*delegates*—we always understood to signify persons who were sent, or deputed. As this heterogeneous mass of faction professed to be a meeting of Wesleyan Delegates, they, of course, intended to pass themselves off as persons elected and sent by the members of the Wesleyan Societies. We presume, they intend to make their appeal to the next Conference in this character. Now, before the acts of a meeting of these pretensions can be considered valid, legal, and binding on any parties, it must be shown that the meeting itself is, *ipso facto*, what it professes to be. All persons within the pale of the British Constitution and living in obedience to the laws, have, no doubt, the right of petition to the king, or legislature ; but, if the great Agitator should succeed in rending Ireland from the empire, and establishing a perfectly independent government ; and, at a distant period, some great faction, political union, or "Grand Central Association," should, for overt acts of rebellion and treason, be placed under the ban of law—would these two parties, because their objects happened to be identical, have the right to form one great aggregate meeting for the purpose of coercing the British Parliament into their measures ? To talk of the right of petition, under such circumstances, is arrant folly : none can enjoy that right but persons living in allegiance to the state. Men who take up arms, revolt, and separate themselves, have taken the law into their own hands ; their new position, whether they remain in mere hostility to the law, or establish themselves

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THE PROPOSED DELEGATE MEETING AT SHEFFIELD.

WE should not deem it of importance to offer any remarks on the *constitution* of the mis-named Delegate Meeting at Manchester, had they not informed us that their proceedings on that occasion were only *provisional*. By this avowal, confirmed by subsequent proceedings, it seems that, at the approaching Conference, we are to be favoured with another *infliction* of their congregated wisdom. As, on their recent assembling, they claimed for themselves the character and functions of a delegated body ; and are to meet under that cognomen again ;—they cannot consider it ill-natured in us to examine their pretensions to this honourable appellation.

In our vulgar and common-sense notions, the term they have applied to themselves—*delegates*—we always understood to signify persons who were sent, or deputed. As this heterogeneous mass of faction professed to be a meeting of Wesleyan Delegates, they, of course, intended to pass themselves off as persons elected and sent by the members of the Wesleyan Societies. We presume, they intend to make their appeal to the next Conference in this character. Now, before the acts of a meeting of these pretensions can be considered valid, legal, and binding on any parties, it must be shown that the meeting itself is, *ipso facto*, what it professes to be. All persons within the pale of the British Constitution and living in obedience to the laws, have, no doubt, the right of petition to the king, or legislature ; but, if the great Agitator should succeed in rending Ireland from the empire, and establishing a perfectly independent government ; and, at a distant period, some great faction, political union, or "Grand Central Association," should, for overt acts of rebellion and treason, be placed under the ban of law—would these two parties, because their objects happened to be identical, have the right to form one great aggregate meeting for the purpose of coercing the British Parliament into their measures ? To talk of the right of petition, under such circumstances, is arrant folly : none can enjoy that right but persons living in allegiance to the state. Men who take up arms, revolt, and separate themselves, have taken the law into their own hands ; their new position, whether they remain in mere hostility to the law, or establish themselves

as an independent community, is their redress itself. They are not in the circumstances of aggrieved petitioners, waiting patiently for a remedy; but in the state of independent rebels, waging war against the state and the institutions of the country. Who, if the chieftains of agitation in Ireland and the radicals of England, should meet together to further their common objects of dismemberment and spoliation, would have the absurdity of considering them the legitimate representatives of the Irish and British people? Their union would be their own act; and, although it might suit them to assume the name of representatives of different constituencies, who does not perceive that the assumption would be a perfect fraud?

This analogy is sufficiently apparent. It is only necessary to analyse the constituent parts of this delegate meeting to show that its assumed character is a falsehood; and all its acts and resolutions, instead of being the proceedings of parties seeking for redress of grievances, are the violent and coercive measures of men in a state of complete separation from, or revolt against the Methodist connexion.

We begin with Dr. Warren. Not because he was the first man at the meeting; but because he was first in the revolt. What an enigma is man! How often the elements of his character appear in perfect contradiction to each other, and the same passions to work contrary ways under different circumstances. Who can deny the Doctor the praise of a noble pride. It is only a few months since we beheld him assuming a lofty mien, standing before the Conference in all the dignity of an independent man, addressing his auditory with conscious superiority, firmly asserting his inflexible purpose to stand or fall by his *principles*, to refuse to listen to the counsels of his brethren, or to abide by their decisions!! He might not then exactly know what the inspiring genius which beat with lofty emotions in his bosom portended; but the swell of sentiment must have been overwhelming! How nobly he rode upon the storm when the elements of confusion were first let loose in debate at Conference, and the raging billows and angry tempest threatened to wreck the Wesleyan vessel. With manly heroism, keen eye, extended and philosophic grasp of thought, and undying love and devotedness to Methodism he took the helm; and, as every one imagined—himself especially—was destined to bear the vessel into port! Either within the pale of the Old Connexion, or the precincts of a new one, founded by his own superior sagacity and knowledge, we did expect, after the astounding displays we had of the Doctor's wonderful capacity at making a pother, that he would have immortalized himself by giving the impress of his mind to his followers. How does the matter stand at this meeting? Why, he appears to have no mind at all! He shifts and shuffles from one position to another; till, at length, he candidly confesses that, in his own opinion, his *understanding* is safer in the keeping of the meeting than in his own. Oh, that he had made this discovery sooner! It would have saved himself infinite trouble, mortification and disgrace; it would have saved the delegates the trouble of meeting and thinking for him; and it would, moreover, have saved the connexion the strife, agitation, and loss which it is now enduring. As men placed in a low situation, who have moved in elevated society, excite the pity of others; so we bespeak the pity of our readers for a gentleman once respectable—and certainly not wanting in the notion that he was so—now fallen into the deepest mental degradation, and humbled, despised, and neglected by the compeers of his folly. But it is not so much with the *spirit* and *manner* of Dr. Warren's appearance at

this meeting, that we have to do, as with his *right* to appear there at all in the character of a delegate. Supposing the revolvers of his own circuit chose to make Dr. Warren one of their representatives to seek an alteration in the laws of Methodism, to negotiate the question with Conference, and then to frame a new constitution—we ask whether, in all fairness, the Doctor was in circumstances to sustain this office? The facts of the case, clearly understood, we should have no objection to put the issue of the question to a jury of the first twelve honest Englishmen we could empanel, whether, in their judgment, Dr. Warren stood in so free, unembarrassed, and honourable a position as to make it allowable, on any known principles of justice and religion, for him to take the part he did at the last meeting, and which—we presume—he proposes to do at the next?

In the first place, Dr. Warren stands before the connexion and the world as an impeached and suspended preacher. He has been suspended by the laws of the body as they now exist; by a district, legally constituted, according to the decisions of the two Courts of Chancery; and on grounds which must bring both himself and his brethren of the district before the Conference. The sentence is open to revision, and the question is undecided. What would a spirit of honour and impartial justice have dictated to Dr. Warren, even supposing he had determined ultimately to follow the course he has chosen to take? Obviously, to wait till his own individual case was fairly settled. If the final issue should be such as to leave him dissatisfied, then surely it would be time enough to appeal to the public as arbitrators. But, instead of this fair and honest course, the interval betwixt the Doctor's suspension and the meeting of Conference is taken up in raising a clamour against the law which, it is alleged, he has violated with a view to its abrogation, and, indeed, a change of the whole system. We ask, is a criminal in circumstances to judge the law which has judged him? What would be thought of the audacity of a disturber of the king's peace turning round upon his judge and saying, "Yes, the facts alleged against me are true: I have broken the law, but I object to submit to your sentence, because the case itself is not in accordance with my notions, of freedom and right." It is very natural that a man should not be much enamoured of the law that condemns him; but the question is, whether he would be a good and impartial judge of the case. This is precisely the question with regard to Dr. Warren. We say nothing respecting the sentence passed upon him; he does not wear the badge with much ease, it is evident; it is natural that he should dislike it, and also that he should abhor the law which suspended him. But in his circumstances, he is not a fit person to judge of the rules affecting himself. There is presumptive proof of the equity and usefulness of these rules, for Dr. Warren submitted to them for upwards of thirty years, without complaint—wrote a *learned* Digest of them, without any note of disaffection—and, moreover, assisted in their administration in several cases of discipline similar to his own. Is he then in circumstances, we ask, to go to Conference as a reformer—to insist on an alteration of the laws and usages of Methodism, to revolutionize the body, to dash the table under his feet, by which he is to be tried? In our notions of propriety and justice, it would have been, at least, more fitting and honourable for the Doctor to have waited till his case had been settled, and then, if he saw good, to seek a reformation of the law? Will the Conference admit him, as a reformer of the law—as the head of a party—as the leader of a revolution? If

they do, we shall conclude that a mental epidemic has befallen them, and they, as well as the Doctor, are gone mad. No; he will have the liberty, we suppose, to appear there; but it will be in the character of a suspended preacher, not of a reformer of the law—a culprit to take his trial, not to dictate terms. Then what kind of a delegate is Dr. Warren, with his sentence hanging over him? Had a constituency existed competent to elect to such an office, he could not be considered a qualified candidate. He is not at liberty to take on him the duties of such a task, and a total moral disqualification arises out of his state and his acts. Besides the excitement under which he labours, he is pledged to a certain line of conduct—to revolutionize, and, if necessary, to destroy that Methodism which has nurtured every good quality of his heart; but, refusing to lend itself to the degrading office of being the panderer to his vanity and ambition, is become the peculiar object of his hatred—a hatred produced by the concentration of all his passions into one. We now see the soaring eagle crawling like a snail beneath the feet of his companions in agitation—the smooth note of the bird of love has been transformed into the hoarse and hollow croak of the black-winged raven, floating with portentous wing along the heavens, and, with scrutinizing glance, watching the hedge-rows, thickets, fields, gardens, and farm-yards, to spy out a stray and unprotected bird on which to fasten his talons, and make his meal. The moral phenomenon of varied passions all uniting in one, is not an uncommon occurrence; and, under certain circumstances, it is perfectly natural. When strong fires burn within the bosom, avenues are necessary, and if natural and easy ones do not present themselves, one will be forced. We perfectly believe all that Dr. Warren has, at various times, declared, respecting his love of Methodism; and we equally believe him now, when, by words and actions, he tells us he abhors it with an unmitigated hatred. Yes; he loved Methodism; but he loved it as the theatre on which he was destined to perform great feats of glory—emblazon his escutcheon with honourable distinction—and hand down his name to future generations as the author of great things. As long as this hope remained, Methodism was beloved; but, expiring last October twelvemonths, the mixed emotions of the Doctor's mind became one; and, failing to woo the object of his fondness, he, then, like the disappointed lover, spurns the virtuous lady as an object of detestation, and follows her with the unmixed hatred of a soul wound up to the highest tension of chagrin. This, we have no doubt, explains the two phases, the bright and affectionate—the dark and murky—which we find in many of the agitators. They are perfectly right when they tell us they devotedly loved Methodism, and we are equally so, when we say that they now hate it with as warm a passion of aversion. They loved it in hope; but not with the simple and pure hope of receiving spiritual edification, improvement in grace, a training for heaven, and a fitness for its spiritual joys; but with these were mixed up the expectation of personal distinction, honour, advancement, and as these once incipient and not very apparent passions grew, so the spiritual ones were weakened; being disappointed of their aliment, they have become rampant; and, now, hope being deferred, the heart is sickened with ambitious madness, and the infuriate passions are pouring out their vengeance against the object of their fondest love. We are in possession of such facts connected with the history of the leading agitators of the connexion as cause us to conclude, and would make the same impression on every impartial person, who might become acquainted with them, that it is chafed and mortified ambition which has transmuted them into the profession of patriotism. Had they been gratified with the distinction and power they sought (but can ambition ever become satisfied?) the world would never have heard their eloquent speeches in praise of their own disinterested sufferings and labours; and against the corruption, tyranny, and power of others.

But to return to the case of Dr. Warren in his character of delegate: his total moral and legal unfitness for this office is not only apparent in the fact of his being a suspended preacher; but, from the additional circumstance of his choosing the vocation of a public and notorious agitator. How has Dr. Warren occupied his leisure since the period of his trial? All the world knows; and, no doubt, this notoriety is the most gratifying event in the Doctor's life—that he has been incessantly engaged in carrying debate, division, agitation, and ruin through the Methodist societies, wherever, by any means, he could gain access. Simply to state that this course is against law is to weaken the moral impression of the enormity of the crime. It is an offence for which we can find no name. The sin against Methodism is great; but the sin against God is infinitely greater. As regards the latter we must leave him in the hands of the "*Judge of the whole earth, who will do right*;" but with respect to the former, we feel ourselves at perfect liberty to state, that after the divisive and revolutionary proceedings of the Doctor, for him to assume the name and office of a delegate to Conference, is a piece of

effrontery such as even the Arch Agitator from the Emerald Isle never assumed in the fulness of his immeasurable and boundless impudence. O'Connell never took on himself the title of delegate from any of the anti-national Associations, of Ireland, to the British parliament. Had he done so, the privilege of parliament would soon have disposed of him in Newgate. But now, an association as Methodistically and morally illegal as those were nationally so—have the hardihood to send their prime agitator as their delegate to Conference, after employing him to the full extent of his feeble powers, to disturb and divide the whole connexion! The thing is too ridiculous for argument, and too serious for ridicule. We confess we know not how to treat so preposterous an assumption. As the proceedings of this anarchical movement are matchless in the records of religious infamy; so the presumption that he will be allowed to sustain the character of a delegate, laden with the crimes of rebellion and division, is a species of folly and pride united, such as is unrecorded in either the annals of the church or of the world. We know, indeed, that in the progress of human affairs, success has often legitimated the greatest villany, so that the injustice of the act has been swamped in the triumph of the hero; but for a mere incendiary, after inflicting as much mischief as his means would allow, to assume the airs and strut of a conqueror, to demand the rights of an equal and independent negotiation, to propose his own terms—and such terms as a conqueror only can have the right to offer; and, if listened to, would place the proposer in a triumphant and dominant attitude over the opposing party;—we say, all this presents Dr. Warren in an aspect of either folly or impudence, such as, we should imagine, the sun never beheld before. Before he wears the official robe of a delegate, and is allowed to stand on an equal footing with the deeply insulted and injured Conference, let him expiate his crimes against the connexion. Honest and honourable men cannot, without a compromise of character, admit a man who has, by every epithet of reproach and slander, insinuation and inuendo, appeal to the Courts of Law against their equitable proceedings and long-established usages, the violation of their peace, and the disruption of their societies;—we say, the man who has done all this, and would have done infinitely more, if his capacity had been equal to his malice, is not in a state to be treated with; and, till he has deeply repented of his sins against the connexion, he can only be dealt with by it “as a heathen man and a publican.”

Besides this prominent individual, we have several *classes* of men in this meeting of delegates. We begin with Messrs. Emmett, Lamb, and Gordon! They may be considered as a distinct *species* amongst these noble animals, and performing a high game of freak and grimace in the Warren *menagerie* in a certain square, in Manchester, and may be expected to re-appear at Sheffield. They, too, profess to be delegates! We want to know who delegated them to the performance of their share of this grand drama. We have long heard of Mr. Emmett as a travelling preacher—next, a supernumerary—next a miller—next a person who has acquired wealth by his wind-mill; and from all we know of his character, we believe he would grind or dispose of “precious little” flour, “without charging for it;”—next, a reformer of Methodism and a large contributor to the *Liverpool Circular*—next, a tried, convicted, and suspended agitator of the Stockton circuit—next, a suitor in Conference for mitigation of his punishment, which, in great kindness to him, was complied with, in the hope of his amendment—next, a return to his old *pleasures*, on the formation of the Manchester and Liverpool Association—and, finally, a delegate, of *his own* choosing, to the grand meeting at Manchester. Here this dusty divine delivers himself of a speech, in which, amongst other topics, he largely and eloquently (!) dwells on his own glories, and tells us how extremely happy he was in his noble work. That he was happy, no one can doubt; for a fool may be happy in meditating folly, as well as a wise man wisdom; a fanatic may be happy in giving vent to his frenzied, excited, and self-inspired nonsense, as well as a man of sober piety, his heavenly meditations; and we know by the confessions of Jonathan Martin that he was in perfect ecstasy—wrought up to the third heavens—when he saw his incendiary attempt had taken effect, and York cathedral was in a blaze. By the bye, these professions of happiness by the different agitators must be most disgusting to every man of sense. Could they make out a case of necessity for their proceedings—that in consequence of the fallen state of the preachers, the corruption of the body, the tyranny of the Conference, and their villainous conduct to be such as “that no honest men can have communion with them;” and that consequently it is essential, as an obligation of public duty, for the “Grand Central” to set about rending the societies, dissolving the connexion, stopping the supplies, and preventing as far as they possibly can the spread of the word of life;—would not the proof of this, to minds possessed of the least pious wisdom and sensibility, produce deep and, indeed, agonizing sorrow? Supposing Mr. Emmett and his compeers are called to the task of bearing

witness against men who were once their brethren—of overthrowing the system of Methodism, and of being the executioners of the vengeance of heaven—is it, we ask them, befitting the character of their awful commission to do it laughing, and in the midst of mirth and joy? A practised hangman may feel a thrill of joy at the thought of putting the wages of his office into his pocket, and the habiliments of his victim on his wretched body, whilst that victim is writhing in the agonies of death; but although the spectators may assent to the justice of the sentence, they mourn over the fate of the man. We tell these happy hangmen—for they all profess to be wondrously happy—that this feeling is infallibly symptomatic of a weak and foolish, a diseased and fanatic, or of a cruel and ferocious mind.

With this happy miller we classed the Rev. James Lamb—alias! a Clonite preacher—alias! a Wesleyan preacher—alias! a sick and poor supernumerary—alias! a stipendiary on the preachers' legalized fund, bought off at the cost of two hundred pounds—alias! as soon as this bargain was settled and the money pocketed, a delegate at Manchester—alias! a hired preacher at the Music Hall, Liverpool. But it is not exactly with Mr. Lamb's Clonite and consequent church of England profession—nor yet with his ministry amongst the Wesleyans—no, nor even with his *declining health*, his *dependance* on the *preachers' fund*, his bargain with it to give up all claims for the consideration of two hundred pounds, and the *manner* in which he performed his part of the agreement: neither have we any thing to do just now with Mr. Lamb's sudden *restoration to good health*—capacity to take a long journey, make eloquent speeches, and enter into a new bargain with the Liverpool wiseacres, with, we presume, the prospect of being able to fulfil his ministry; with none of these things have we any thing to do just at present, but our business being with his delegation, we do take the liberty to ask Mr. Lamb who sent him, what constituency he may happen to represent, and what Irish interests he is come over to support? Above all, we wish to know in what character he intends to appear before the Conference? If we understand the matter rightly, he, together with Mr. Emmett, are both Wesleyan preachers, have their names on their Minutes, and are amenable to its tribunals. It seems by their assuming the office of delegate, that they waive their rights as preachers; but will the Conference admit this plea? Mr. Emmett tells us in his speech that he was on his way to the superintendent to resign, but he was arrested in his career by some local brother, who kindly dissuaded him from doing so just then, because they wanted a head of opposition at the approaching quarterly meeting—(we wonder what the tail of radicalism in the Stockton circuit can be with such a head)—he was prevailed upon to desist, and he tells us that he appeared at this grand central meeting in the double character of a Methodist preacher and a delegate. We believe this to be the case with Mr. Lamb also. These two reverend gentlemen then, it appears, intend to be delegates *to themselves* as well as to others. We think they ought to have had the fairness to have made their election of one of these offices only; and as they have not, we imagine the first thing Conference will do will be to untwist these two functional cords for them; and having made the preacher stand out a separate being from the delegate, cause him to answer for the injuries he has done the cause of Methodism. But after all, there does not appear much *malice prepense* in the speech of this Mr. Lamb. His soul does not seem very deeply saturated with the Association venom. There are many kinds of Irishmen. Amongst others, adventurers of all sorts, who forsake their own country in search of better fortunes in England. We really attribute no worse feeling to Mr. Lamb than that after having done his best, and made his last and final bargain in the Emerald Isle, he concluded that better fortunes awaited him at Manchester. Stimulated by this urgent motive he crossed the channel to begin the new avocation of revolution, and he has met with the reward his patriotism sought, by now being the stipendiary preacher of the Association at the Music Hall.

The next gentleman we mention as belonging to the class of *pseudo* preachers is the Rev. John Gordon. This young hero of the Association commenced his ministry with great eclat, a few years ago, as the son of a gentleman, a youth of education, of great native powers of mind, and as a person to whom the connexion might look with confidence as one of its most hopeful ministers and pillars. How often it is found—either from some constitutional flaw, mental defect, or else by the just ordination of God—that the child of hope and promise disappoints the expectations of admiring friends, while the unpretending, but pious, persevering, and naturally vigorous in intellect, gradually emerge from lowliness and obscurity, and become, by the peculiar providence and blessing of God, what the others appeared destined to be—the ornaments of the church! The ministry of Mr. Gordon was a complete failure; and whether he concluded that he had mistaken his calling from this circumstance or not, we are unable to say; but we find that a few months ago he chose to be offended with the proceedings

of Conference on the Rev. J. R. Stephen's case, sent in his resignation, and took his father's business of spirit merchant, wholesale and retail. Some things fall out very opportunely; and the incidents connected with this gentleman's retirement from the ministry are of this description. We have a concatenation of accidents of a most harmonious kind to bring about Mr. Gordon's offence and consequent resignation.—The anti-church propensities of J. R. Stephens, and the decision of Conference in his case, are the proximate causes of his umbrage and considering himself at liberty to abandon that ministry which he had professed to receive from God. Then in connection with his present settlement, we have his father's ability to retire from business, his inclination to do so at this particular period, and the business itself in that state of preparation as to allow one occupant to abandon it and another to take possession, without any lengthened negotiation. The adaptation of these events one to another have all the appearance of design and arrangement; and yet we are given to understand that Mr. Gordon's abandonment of his connection with the Methodist ministry and his occupancy of his present spirit trade depended on the contingency of J. R. Stephen's case. It may be so; but it surpasses our capacity of credulity. We believe that circumstance was made the apology for a step previously thought of, desired, and in all probability, resolved upon. But why do we dwell on these matters—what, we shall be asked, have they to do with the question in debate? We tell our readers at once they have nothing to do with the principle of the controversy, but much with its circumstances. ¶For instance: Mr. Gordon, and all the rest of the anarchists, endeavour to fix on Methodism the stigma of doing something so offensive to their purity and liberality, as to force them to take their hostile attitude. Mr. Gordon tells us the proceedings of Conference on a given case compelled him to resign his office of preacher, and become a tradesman and an agitator. We tell him honestly we doubt it; that from all the concurrent facts of the transaction, we believe that other inducements led to this choice; and that to charge other parties with the guilt of compelling him to abandon his pastoral profession, and take to that of selling gin and furiously rending the church of God, is both disingenuous and false. We believe Mr. Gordon has resigned his office of a preacher formally, and that he consequently does not stand in the attitude of the two last mentioned gentlemen—a delegate *from himself to himself*. We admit that Mr. Gordon is a *bona fide* delegate. He is the chosen representative of the Dudley anti-Methodist society; or if he please, of the mixed multitude he describes in his speech. We suppose, in this notable meeting, we have a living and graphic illustration of “the popular interference and control,” contended for in Mr. Gordon's formal principle, passed at the delegate meeting and contended for in all his speeches and letters. How strangely does radicalism transform the human character! Who would have thought, some few years ago, that a young man of John Gordon's polite bearing, courtesy, gentlemanly manners, and apparent good breeding, could be now found, not only to lend himself, but actually to conjure up and create the most brutal assembly—taking his own account of the case—we ever read of, calling itself Christian? He will not believe us, of course; but it is true, that our heart mourns when we think of what he once was, and what in the dawn and spring solstice of his life all his friends—the dearest of whom now in heaven, fondly hoped he would be—that he should be now the head and leader of such a scene as he describes at Dudley. We really know not on what principles to account for these monstrous transmutations of character. We know indeed that a strange mixture of logic and laughter were blended in the mental constitution of this young gentleman; that the solution of some metaphysical problem, or a good piece of fun would be an equal temptation to him; but we did really imagine that *good breeding* or *good feeling* would have preserved him from leading a meeting which will be considered by moderate men, of all parties, as an insult and an outrage on even the decencies of society. What does Mr. Gordon represent in his character of delegate? We presume the meeting mentioned in his speech forms his constituency. So then he has the taste to avow himself as the type and living expression of a set of men, opinions, feelings, and conduct, that would be a disgrace to so many savages in New Zealand. Let him wear his honour—no one will envy him. We cannot believe that even the civilized part of the Association itself, can approve of the savage violence of the Dudley associates. There are indeed odd kinds of Christians belonging to this confederacy; but really we cannot think that any great number from amongst those parts of the country which have, for any length of time, been favoured with British knowledge and freedom, can feel complacency in the outrage committed on order and decency, by these said Herculaneum men of Dudley. Behold John Gordon coming forward at Sheffield, the representative and advocate of popular rights, and, especially, the right of “all the members of society to *interfere* in the working of the entire system of the connexion,” and especially in the discharge of the ministerial office, and the administration

of discipline; how gloriously he can illustrate and enforce his argument by the display of Christian piety, prudence, courtesy, and fair dealing by his constituents, in the case in question! He has not only abstract justice on his side; but now he can prove to demonstration, that the democratic principle he got the delegates to adopt at Manchester, will, in practice, work most effectually. Most effectually it wrought in Dudley certainly, for as to rule, law, fair debate, impartial judgment, poor Messrs. Edwards and Frankland, all went to the dogs together, by the vociferous clamour and "physical force" of a thousand men, pressing round two unprotected preachers, and, to use Mr. Gordon's own phrase, "*calling them every thing indifferent.*" We are fond of the inductive test, and here we have it. We behold religious democracy under the guidance of one of its most noted leaders, actually trampling down every thing before it, like a herd of elephants pressing beneath their brawny bodies all the lighter material which might happen to stand in their path. This first demonstration of popular purity and moderation is a good beginning; only let the connexion be placed under its sway, and it will soon be purged of its impurities and piety both; for, in fact, all the pious and good would flee, if not for their lives, yet for their religion; and would either form themselves into separate societies, or unite with other churches wherein they might, without molestation, enjoy the privilege of divine worship and Christian communion.

With what consistency Mr. Gordon can desire to go as a delegate to the Methodist Conference, and hold any kind of intercourse with men whom, by a set of vulgar figures, he represents as "*dishonest, pick-pockets, and murderers,*" we are at a loss to conceive. They will, however, know how to appreciate his representation of their character, as well as his own exploits at Leeds, Liverpool, Hull, and many other places; and as we are not yet obliged, by any law of the country, to hold companionship with men who have maligned us, we have only to say, that, if Methodist preachers are mean enough to have communication with him, except for the purpose of heartily receiving his resignation, they will deserve the character he has given them, which is one of the basest and blackest which a tortuous and vindictive mind could possibly invent. We have one word more respecting Mr. Gordon and his Dudley friends; it is—if the Conference received him as their representative, it would be on the avowed or tacit acknowledgment of them as Methodists. Will any men, we ask, who have the least respect for either their own character, or religion, ever identify themselves with such a race? To save themselves from being classed with creatures as rough and as sooty as the locality they inhabit, they will beg to be excused. To admit a fraternity with these black bears would be to allow themselves to be of their species; but if the *soi disant* Methodists of Dudley were a sample of the true stock, we should consider it a blessing to the nation and the world, that the race should become extinct as soon as possible. We, for our parts, would chaunt a requiem of peace to its manes, and heartily pray that the day might be very distant when any thing, bearing the Christian name, should again live after the fashion and similitude of Dudley Association Methodism.

We do not recollect the names of the parties who appeared as the delegates of Manchester, Liverpool, and other places, and who, we presume, are to assemble in that character at Sheffield. But though we disapprove of these principles and proceedings *in toto*, and maintain, that in their present position, as Associates, they have no right to appear in the garb and under the name of Methodists; yet we do admit that they hold a much more honourable position than the men who were, as ministers, pledged by a thousand obligations and vows to promote the peace, unity, prosperity, and well-being of the connexion. The holiness, responsibility, and duties of the sacred ministry rested on them; and, instead of leading the simple-hearted and pious members of the societies astray, filling their minds with unfounded jealousies, fixing and directing their animosity against men and a system which have led them to salvation; and, moreover, we fear, in innumerable cases endangering their peace and stability, were bound by every consideration to guard against consequences so fearful;—we say, these ministerial leaders of the van of division ought to be singled from the general mass, and branded with a mark of special guilt. When the Manchester revolt began, Dr. Warren informed his deluded followers that his suspension was illegal, and on that fallacious opinion, assumed that he remained the rightful superintendent of the first circuit, formed opposition leaders' meetings, provided separate places of worship, organized a new plan of operation on the platform of the old circuit, and leading the people into these separate inclosures and this independent communion, in which they renounced all fellowship with established Methodism—he taught them to believe that they were good and valid members still. This was the case in Liverpool and elsewhere; so that the grand artifice employed with the people has been to delude them into the opinion, that they re-

mained members of society, and had a right to all its privileges. Now we hold that there is an essential difference betwixt the guilt of the *deceived* and that of the *deceiver*. No doubt, great numbers in the two principal towns of the secession consider, at this moment, that they are legitimate members of the Wesleyan society, and are in circumstances to send delegates to Conference. The question turns on two points; the first is, whether or not belonging to the Association is a violation of the rules and economy of the body—and the second is, whether, on the proof of its being a violation of law, they can have the right to go to Conference, not for a redress of grievances, which we admit, but as a separate and independent body, to negotiate an entire change of the economy of the connexion.

With regard to the first question, we need not spend time in proving the affirmative; for most of the leading members of the Association have repeatedly confessed, that their proceedings were a transgression of the law as it stood; and, in addition to this, every organized body, whether civil or religious, must have the right to defend itself against those aggressions, which, on the face of them are calculated, and, on the avowals of the agitating parties, are intended to destroy the social compact. This law of nature, and the *common law* of society, may, in many cases, be the only rules of action, because the ingenuity of transgressors may enable them to devise schemes of revolution which may not fall within the limits of statute law. Many of the most important trials which have taken place in our courts, on cases of riot, agitation, and revolution, have rested on this *non scripta lex* of society. This is exactly the case with this Association. Its avowed objects have been to subvert the present order of Methodism. They may consider it an evil and wicked system; but its ministers, local authorities, and the great body of its people may judge it to be scriptural and useful. Then they must possess the rights of self-defence, and if the agitating party determine not to coalesce—to live in peace and unison with the body; but, on the other hand, manifest a fixed purpose to employ their privilege to destroy the fellowship itself, then it must be the clear right of the society to separate such elements of revolution; for if they remain, they keep it in constant agitation, and ultimately reduce it to a state of ruin.

Then, irrespective of the written law of the connexion, it is most clear that the Association has placed itself beyond the pale of the constitution of Methodism. But besides the common law, and scriptural justice of the case, thus stated, the connexion having had to pass through trials of a somewhat similar nature, had armed itself with regulations and rules suitable to the emergency. Not a man amongst the agitators could be ignorant of the fact, that his union with the Association was a gross violation of the rules by which he professed to be governed. These rules are valuable; but had they not existed, the separation of men from the society, who were disturbing its peace, crippling its energies, and endangering its existence, would, on the obvious principles of common justice, and the Word of God, been equally righteous. But this removal of the members of the Association from the societies, is, in most cases, a perfectly voluntary act. The people in the First Manchester circuit chose to follow their guide, Dr. Warren, and we do not recollect that any act of discipline was exercised, except in his own case. In the other circuits of that town, a few revolutionary officers, who judged it to be their calling to agitate and divide the societies, were for these overt acts of sin and schism, expelled from their brethren, and the rest voluntarily followed. In Liverpool, the ring-leaders of the revolt alone, were, in the first instance, selected; and up to the termination of the process of separation, very few were called to trial—all the rest left the societies by their own choice, preferring to remain with their leaders, and to breathe the warm atmosphere of agitation, rather than continue peacefully united in the old body. The facts, then, are few and simple; a number of officers of the society, have been expelled for a gross and outrageous violation of its laws—breaking its unity—seeking to revolutionize its polity—and, as it turns out by Dr. Warren's confession, if necessary, rather than stop short of their purpose, destroying Methodism, root and branch. As must always be the case in public bodies, these men had influence sufficient to attach a number of private members to themselves, and these, following the banners of their leaders, placed themselves in a state of open division and independence of the society. The question as to the non-legality of the separation of the other parties cannot be raised, for it is their own act. "They went out from us, because they chose not to be of us." If the comparatively few who had been expelled had felt their sentence to be unjust, they had their appeal; but not choosing to avail themselves of this right, and preferring agitation to a quiet recourse to reason and law, they have, to all intents and purposes, placed themselves beyond its redress.

It being thus evident that the Association is in a state of separation; and, with the exception of the few persons who were expelled, by their own revolutionary act,

how does it appear that they are in a condition to send delegates to the Methodist Conference. They have ceased to belong to the society, and have also established themselves as a distinct community; and yet they claim the liberty to interfere in its affairs. They act on a supposed right to elect delegates—to establish a grand compact between themselves and the Conference—having for its object, the elevation of their own power, and the entire subserviency of the connexion to their views. No one denies them the liberty to legislate; but let them limit their functions to the Association. Methodist societies do not choose them, but parties in a state of avowed hostility; and how they can imagine they have the right to appear in their present character as Wesleyan delegates, we are at a loss to conceive.

But although the objection against these parties being considered an integral part of the Methodist body is sufficiently apparent, and must nullify their right to act as negotiators, yet the aggressive and coercive attitude they have assumed from the beginning renders it ten-fold more so. To say the least, their first ought to have been their last measure. If dissatisfied with the economy of Methodism, they ought to have proposed their own improved edition, supported by argument—appeals to Scripture—proofs and demonstrations of the corruption and oppression of the system as it is—and then, if their arguments were incapable of disproof, and their demands refused, it would have been time enough to have sounded the tocsin of war. Instead of this rational and Christian course being adopted, the first appeal they make to the passions of the people is at a time when no power on earth existed competent to consider the subject of any alteration; they couple the first enunciation of their views and opinions, as to what reforms they demand, with language of reproach and intimidation; assert that no honest man can continue in union with the Conference; that they will stop the supplies, and agitate the connexion to its centre; and they forthwith form themselves into a "Grand Central Association" for these purposes. Surely it would have been sufficient to have resorted to these outrageous measures as a last refuge from opposition. They have kept their word, and sent their emissaries of mischief through every part of the country where they could gain access. The contest has not been a contest of reason, principle, and religion, but it has been the war of faction and outrage. Instead of seeking the reformation of the polity first, and then, on its obstinate refusal to yield to their skill, its dissolution, as an incorrigible abuse, they seek its entire overthrow as a primary proceeding, with the intention, we presume, of building a beautiful fabric out of the chaos they have occasioned. Is this Association in a state to send delegates to a body which it has attempted thus utterly to subvert by a revolutionary process? Failing in their attempt, they modestly propose that the injured party shall kindly let them into their house and afford them facilities to do by their connivance and aid what they find they cannot do by open force—grind the beautiful frame of the Wesleyan polity into the dust of democracy, to be trampled upon by the feet of the multitude.

But there are some very curious facts, not yet mentioned, respecting the composition of this *pseudo* delegate meeting, which we have left ourselves little room to notice. Besides the gentlemen who were not Methodists, and never had been, we find a whole sect of separatists admitted. We refer to the so-called Protestant Methodists, with Messrs. Sigston and Matthew Johnson as their representatives.—These parties have been divided from the connexion for the past seven years, have formed for themselves a separate code of laws and government, have poured forth their foul-mouthed abuse in every variety of epithet, have done their utmost to degrade, divide, and ruin the connexion; and true to the *animus* of their cause, as soon as a new occasion for mischief arises, they stand forth again on the stage. Growing bold by success, these practised adepts at agitation appear amongst the new comers with striking superiority. They insist on an equality of rights and power with them, and even before they are admitted, formally compel the novel dunces to compromise the fair and impartial consideration of the case on which they had met, by avowing that the only ground on which they could unite and afford their counsel and strength was that of admitting the principle of lay delegation. We have nothing to say respecting the right of these two parties to amalgamate. Let them do it if they please; but pray, in what sense can Messrs. Sigston and Matthew Johnson be considered Wesleyan delegates? They have founded a church after their own heart's desire, and it has now been in operation some years. To our certain knowledge it has worked admirably; for it has purged off the feculant humours of the Leeds societies to such a degree as to restore them to a state of health, vigour, and fruitfulness never enjoyed before.—Why are not these *protestors* content with the grandeur of their exploits and the fruits of their patriotic zeal? We know—for we know the men. It would as ill suit the genus of their religion to find a state of peace, and to cultivate the gentler graces of religion, as it would suit the salamander to live out of the fire. We wonder

what these and some other good Christians of our day will do in heaven, when they "*rest from their labours*." When these two parties made common cause did either of them imagine that their claims as Wesleyan delegates would be acknowledged? Not they indeed. Their fraternization was for no such purpose. Each party felt its own weakness, and as midnight depredators unite to keep each other's courage up, so did these despoilers of the church. Their object being intimidation, they felt that the greater their numbers, however got together, the more impressive would be this *argumentum ad hominem*. And it would occur to the prime movers of the agitation that if they failed to intimidate the Conference by "*brute force*," they should become a more efficient band to carry on the guerrilla war through the kingdom after Conference, by enlisting these Leeds mercenaries, under leaders so skilful and well tried as Messrs, Sigston and Johnson. We have no doubt but the grand muster to take place at Sheffield, is to form an encampment of hostile forces. The agitators know well that their principles and plans—if they have any thing matured—are perfectly inadmissible; that, constituted as they will be of "*a mixed multitude*," without credentials and a valid title to the office they have assumed:—we say, there surely must be common sense enough left among these persons to perceive that no negotiation can be conducted with them. What, then, is asked, is it intended to cast all these good men out—will the Conference *do nothing for us*? In plain English, this question must mean, if it mean any thing—will not Conference consider our union with the body a sufficient equivalent for the admission of our principles and the change of the constitution? At once we say—NO! The door of Methodism is now open to all those, who, in possessing its privileges, choose to conform to its rules. There is no barrier against those who have been deluded into the Association returning to their old friends. They may enjoy Methodism just on the same conditions as all the rest of the societies, and on which they themselves always enjoyed it. But if the Association men say—we wish to belong to your body, for it will be much more congenial with our feelings to remain with you than to form a new society: but it must be conditional; and the conditions shall be, that *all things shall be controlled by the popular voice, local meetings shall be independent, and delegates shall be sent to Conference*; these are our terms, and we imagine we give you a sufficient compensation for these sacrifices in condescending to give you the weight of our name and influence, together with our pious labours. Stop a little, good friends of the Association—no doubt the Conference will say—we have no personal malice to gratify against you; you are fellow men and fellow Christians; we should most gladly see you peacefully united with us, but then, the price to be paid we consider a little too high. *You demand Methodism as the fee simple for yourselves.*

This is the true question proposed by the Association to the connexion, and this is the question to be decided at Conference: Shall Methodism remain in its present state, or shall it be given up to secure and preserve the persons composing the Association? Shall Methodism rest on the Poll Deed, the integrity of Conference, doctrines and discipline legally secured, the well-balanced and reciprocal rights of preachers and people, the simple and grand design of extending religion through the world, or shall it be moved from this rock and be placed on the right of "*popular control in all things*," which is no other than the surrender of all the providential safeguards given to the connexion, and the abandonment of the work of God to the popular will. In one word the question is: Shall the Methodist connexion continue to obey the great Head of the Church as He teaches us His will in the Scriptures of truth, or the hydra-headed idol now set up in its place—democracy? *We know what the reply will be!*

THE METHODIST NEW CONNEXION AND ITS APOLOGY FOR ITS COMPARATIVELY LITTLE SUCCESS.

It has been one of our duties, of late, to exhibit the polity of the New Connexion to our readers. This avowal of obligation ought not to awaken any surprise, even among the members of that body, for we have acted only on the principle of self-defence. If some of the "*Heads of Houses*," had not assumed the right of intermeddling with the affairs of our community—if they had not branded our excellent form of government with a variety of unjust and insulting names to render it odious in the eyes of Britons and Christians—if they had not, above all things, *intruded* their system of ecclesiastical rule, as "*altogether lovely*," on the attention of Wesleyan Methodists for their acceptance, we should never have noticed the New Connexion; and all those statements of facts which have been very lately designated "*attacks, greatly calculated to produce false and injurious impressions on the public mind*," would not have been written. We can declare, with all sincerity, that in this department of our *illuminating* labour, we have not had any intention to make "*false impressions*" on the spirits of men. We have carefully examined the polity and history of the New Connexion; and our objections to its government have been chiefly supported by quotations from the authorised publications of the body.

It is written at page 52 of this work, "the most recent trial of this union of the secular and pastoral character in the government of the church has been made by the New Connexion;" and this affirmation is said to "contain two egregious blunders." The proofs of this strong charge are amusingly clever! First: "The New Connexion has never made such a trial." Second: "The system of the New Connexion is not the *most recent* trial, for the Ranters have made it since the former body"!! Surely this evidence is "complicated and self-contradictory," for the second proposition *destroys* the first! This is indeed blowing hot and cold. What an "egregious blunder!"—The trifling error which there may be in our statement, we corrected in No. 9 of the *Illuminator*, by naming it "*one of the most recent trials*" to combine men who are "entangled with the affairs of this life" with Christian ministers to govern the church of the Redeemer.

We have charged the polity of the New Connexion with *inefficacy*—with being a system not adapted to propagate Christianity on a scale which is at all commensurate to the wants and miseries of a dying world—and it appears to be very unpalatable. This dissatisfaction does not, of course, in the least surprise us. We have too much ground to fear that this community is far warmer with a *proselyting*, than a Christianizing zeal. We see it courting the self-titled "Grand Central Association," and wishing to form an alliance with that democratic fraternity. Hence, it is "most fervently hoped that the Association will, under the direction of Providence, be prevented from forming a new denomination;"—why this is done already, for its preachers, its congregations, and its societies are no more Wesleyan Methodists than the disciples of Alexander Kilham; and "what a man seeth, why doeth he yet hope for?" "And should they have to determine with what sect of Methodists they shall be identified, it is desired that the New Connexion may stand on fair ground, and possess a claim to approval, at least equal to what may be advanced by other parties." We are inclined to think that this courtship will not succeed. Messrs. Sigston and Co. seem to be outmanœuvring the proselyting oligarchists of the New Connexion by having joined the "Grandeess;" and we do not as yet perceive how their plans are to be disconcerted, except the New Methodists will imitate those denominated Protestant, by uniting themselves to the Association, and, as the learned Dr. would say, "take pot luck with them." Our opinion is, that the Association will not go over to the New Connexion, for the "grandeess" love a successful cause, and they know that body, though it has existed and laboured since 1797, has made little progress. They also flatter themselves with the prospect of constructing a "popular interference" machine, which will be much less liable to be "clogged in its wheels" than that which was manufactured in the year 1797. A multitude of mechanics—all of first-rate talent in their own estimation—are busy at work to complete the new machine, and it is shortly to be exhibited in Sheffield as an unrivalled specimen of art with powers sufficient to move the world!

An attempt has been made in the meantime to remove an impression from the Association that the machine made by Messrs. Kilham and Co. has *not* worked well. It has been found rather a *puzzling* fact, that during the first thirty-eight years of the Wesleyan Methodists—with a system of government said to be an outrage upon reason, scripture, and protestantism—their increase was *more than treble* that of the New Connexion for the same length of time. The way of accounting for this striking difference by the latter body claims some attention.

"It is not the fault of the system; and even if it were caused by the chilling influence of lay delegation, it would not furnish a single argument against the plan." Indeed! Though a doctor might perform very few cures among many patients, it would not argue anything wrong in his system of treatment! However corrupt the fruit which grows on a tree may be proved, it will not show the tree to be unsound! Excellent logic!

"Moreover, the New Connexion had to originate in those districts where the ground was already occupied." This declaration is correct only in a limited sense. The means of communicating religious information were to be found in the crowded town and scattered villages of our land; yet the territory has been unoccupied to such an extent as to leave abundance of room for the New Connexion to labour, and "turn many to righteousness." After all the provision which has been made by the Established Church, and by the voluntary principle for the instruction and salvation of a vast and constantly increasing population, there is still a great deficiency to be supplied. More holy temples and zealous ministers are wanted; and the doctrines of the cross have yet "all the charms and freshness of novelty," for hundreds of thousands who need to be sought in the wilderness, that they may be reclaimed to the fold of the good Shepherd.

The New Connexion might have found unoccupied ground in Wales, where, in one circuit, they had sixteen societies, according to the minutes of 1809; but these,

instead of multiplying have been all *lost* to the body! Vacant ground likewise might have been broken and cultivated by them in Scotland. They had, for several years, a society of more than 100 members in Glasgow; but these, like those in Wales, have been *lost* to the connexion, and Scotland has been abandoned!! England also presented to them its dreary wastes for moral cultivation. They commendably formed, in this belief, a home missionary society, held public meetings, and made collections to spread saving truth among perishing Englishmen; but this excellent project *fell* to the ground: and their principle mode of extending their community at present is by *sanctioning* dissensions and divisions among the people of God! As a strong proof of the inefficacy of the new system, we may be allowed to say, that Blackburn, Wigan, York, Taunton, Bristol, Leicester, Worcester, &c., once stood upon the minutes as *circuits*; but they were all unfruitful, and at length deserted! In all these populous cities and towns the body "began to build, and was not able to finish."

In Ireland, too, "there is much land to be possessed." The New connexion have long had a cause there, which, as in most instances on this side the channel, originated in unpleasant circumstances. The members stand on the Minutes of 1799—before any preacher had been appointed—320 in number. At the Conference of 1825, Ireland was made a Missionary station; and it was occupied in 1834 by eleven travelling preachers, all dignified with the name of Missionaries; they had ten chapels, and the members in society amounted to 901; which is an increase of *only* 127 upon the number of 1810. On the Minutes of Conference taken twenty-five years since, the Irish members are 774! This Missionary cause of the New connexion is rather in the *garden* than in the desert of Ireland. We believe the north of that country requires their help: still, we are equally confident, their preachers have yet to visit in the *south* of that unfortunate island the masses of people who "need them most." Well might this mission be called by a celebrated Calvinistic minister, "the old thing with a new name."

We have entered into a melancholy detail of New connexion operations and dis-appointments, not because it contributes to our pleasure, but to demonstrate, by an induction of facts, that the system which recognizes "the right of popular interference in all the affairs of the church" is not calculated to diffuse an earnest Christianity, to any gratifying extent, among mankind. We are aware of "the flattering unction" which some readers of this article will lay to their hearts; they will say, "the New connexion have wanted suitable agents, commodious chapels, and adequate means to support them; they have also met with much persecution, difficulty, and discouragement, especially from the professed followers of Christ." Let us grant all these things, and what then? It is said, "they satisfactorily account for the slow progress which the sect has made." We must dissent from this conclusion, for the Wesleyan connexion had to struggle in its infant state with similar obstacles; and yet it went on "from conquering to conquer," and its fame is gone into all the world!

When we are told that the New connexion have wanted agents, chapels, and funds to enable the vessel which has sometimes been "water-logged to make way;" our reply is, that its form of polity has been *void of the energy to create them*. And when we are informed that its progress has been impeded by difficulties and discouragements from the world and the church; our answer is, that the New connexion government has been *without power to grapple* with them, to *subdue* them, to *triumph* over them. On what other principle can we account for its abandonment of Scotland, Wales, such a number of English circuits, and of the Home Missionary society? Its uncontrolled democracy is its weakness; and this is the grand cause of those manifold failures which are deeply humbling to republican pride and vanity.

The dark picture which we have drawn from authentic sources of the workings of the New connexion system, is *truly admonitory to Wesleyan Methodists*. It loudly calls upon them to stand faithful to the discipline *as at present* established in the body, and which is the most compact and efficacious in Christendom. It possesses so much vigour, zeal, and enterprize that its friends are never put to the blush for its want of success. No: it is proverbially active and spreading; and it ought, it must, it shall be retained, with a mild, yet unflinching firmness; otherwise the glory will depart from the body. Yes: revolutionize the system—violate the provisions of the Poll Deed, by opening the doors to a number of radical orators—constitute females* as well as males

* The way of delegating delegates in the New connexion is not uniform. Universal suffrage in some circuits is carried farther than the lowest radicals have ever purposed to push it in the state. Even *women*, old and young, vote for delegates in their classes by a sort of *ballot*! Paul was so far from allowing females to vote, that he did not allow them "*speak in the church*." There is this, however, to be said in his defence—he was not a rampant democrat. Some of the itinerant speech-makers say, "the ladies are every where in their favour." Query: have they promised these smiling matrons and virgins that they shall be *enfranchised*?

electors of delegates—make all local meetings independent; and the polity of Methodism will be treated like Sampson when “the seven locks” were cut off his head, “*his strength went from him*,” and we shall have to write in future years apologies for being unable to conquer the uncircumcised Philistines. We have, however, the full assurance of hope that we shall not thus fall before our enemies; our Sampson is still vigorous; and though the radicals intend to muster strong in the town where excellent razors are made, we have no fear of the Conference acting the treacherous part of the barbarous and barbarizing Delilah by allowing them to “shave off the seven locks.”

EPSILON.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—I should imagine it utterly impossible for any man whose mind is not fettered by prejudice, nor beclouded by the mists of faction, to view the “Grand Central Association,” and its proceedings, without being amused at the heterogeneous character of the materials of which it is composed, and the strange incongruity of its general operations. And the natural conclusions at which the calm observer who is conversant with human nature will arrive, is, that such a strange conglomeration of subjects, so diversified in their character, cannot by any possibility long adhere together.

As the existence of monstrosity is usually produced by unnatural and unhallowed connexions, so this Manchester incubus has been produced by an attempt to associate the levelling principles of the “radical” school in the political world, with Christianity—or, rather, with Wesleyan Methodism; and the whole affair is quite in keeping with the source from which it originated. Whether we consider their restless instability of purpose—their slanderous attacks upon individual character—or their ruthless exertions to agitate and destroy the peace of society, we must conclude that the members of this notorious Association are influenced by a crooked policy of the very lowest grade, and not by those divine and heaven-born principles so admirably epitomised in 1st Corinthians, chapter xiii.

Whilst we contemplate the circumstances of the persons who are associated with Dr. Warren, we are forcibly reminded of the character of those who resorted to David, at the cave of Adullam: “And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was DISCONTENTED, gathered themselves unto him, and he became a captain over them.”—(1 Sam. xxii. 2.)

It is my design in this and a succeeding paper to glance at some of the prominent features in the character of the “Grand Central Association.” And in order to be as accurate as possible, I shall frequently take the liberty of using the documents which have been furnished by its own members. In prosecuting my design, I shall, in glancing at the said Association, speaking ironically, consider—

1. The *unity* of its parts.

That the origin of the discontent of those persons who compose this novel Association is widely dissimilar, must be well known to all who are conversant with their history. In order to learn who and what they are, we naturally refer to “the corrected Report of the Meeting of (the *pseudo*) Wesleyan Methodist Delegates,” recently held in Manchester. By a delegate, I understand a person *legally* appointed to act in behalf of one or more other persons. To be *LEGALLY* appointed as “Wesleyan Methodist delegates,” they *must* be chosen either by the quarterly meeting of the circuit or the leaders’ meeting of the society. In the “Report” which lies before me, I find the persons assembled are afraid to call themselves “representatives of circuits; lest the circuits, as such, might object that they had sent no representatives to that meeting.” And yet they specify “Liverpool North” and “Liverpool South,” which are the regular designations of two Wesleyan Methodist circuits in that town. Also in this “Report,” I find a distinction made between those persons who are “official” and those who are not; hence Messrs. Hay, of Carrickfergus, Wood of Macclesfield, and Beard and Waller, of New Mills, are marked as not being official men. Now, though I sustain no office amongst the Wesleyan Methodists, yet being warmly attached to the body, and to Methodism as it is, I should like to know what difference there was in the appointment of these four gentlemen and of those from the other thirty-four places or circuits; also, I should be glad to ascertain by whom and in what manner the deputies from Bolton, Bury, Blackburn, Birmingham, Bradford, Dublin, Hull, and York were appointed. I apprehend, if the truth were known, we should find that they have made a distinction without a difference. From this document it appears, taking the order of time, that the first class of *discontents* which claims our attention is composed of fuor

persons from Leeds and two from Manchester, who designate themselves "*Protestant Methodists*." Though we must confess that we are at a loss to understand with what propriety those who have adopted this cognomen for upwards of six years, and have established an entirely different system of government, can call themselves "*Wesleyan Methodist* delegates." These gentlemen, with a number of others who were accustomed to worship in the old chapel at Leeds, not satisfied with having a share in the management of the affairs of their own chapel, strangely resolved that those persons who worshipped in the new, or Brunswick chapel, should not gratify themselves by erecting an organ in their own place of worship. In proof that these anti-organ agitators did not belong to Brunswick chapel, it is only necessary to state the fact, that when the division took place, which was occasioned by these dissentients, of 32 leaders and 767 connected with the secession in the Leeds East circuit, *only* 4 leaders and 90 members belonged to the congregation assembling in Brunswick chapel; while 28 leaders and 676 members belonged to the congregation at the old chapel and at the Bank. The official age of these dissentient leaders is worthy of remark: of these 32 leaders, only 8 had been in office seven years, and only one of these eight had been in office twenty years; and he on a former occasion had taken a leading part in dividing the excellent society at Leeds. In this painful affair, the trustees did not take a single step toward the erection of an organ, till they had received a petition from the pew-holders requesting such erection, signed by a proportion of 76 out of 84.

Although we cannot but lament that so many simple honest-hearted persons should have been led away by a set of unstable restless agitators, who evidently wished to tyrannize over preachers, trustees, and seat-holders; nevertheless the benefit which a society derives from throwing off such deleterious ingredients in a time of fermentation, will appear strikingly manifest if we compare the Leeds societies in 1827 (the year before the division), with their state in 1834; and the result of such a comparison will be highly consolatory and cheering to some circuits at the present painful juncture. The numbers in society in the Leeds circuits in A.D. 1827 were 5200; whilst in A.D. 1834, they were 6986: being a clear increase (after filling up the vacancies occasioned by the secession), of 1786 members. And further, on the Leeds circuits, the yearly collections of 1834 exceeded those of 1827 to the amount of £41; the July collection, £31 14s; the Kingswood, &c., £59 15s 8½d; the chapel fund, £111 11s 2d! the auxiliary, or old preachers' fund, £23 4s; and the Missionary fund, £204 11s 4d. In addition, they have erected two of the largest chapels in the nation in the said town of Leeds, since the division took place. And yet, the popular doctrine of these dissentients in 1828 was—"STOP THE SUPPLIES." The language which they adopted was—"We must starve our preachers into compliance; they are vulnerable only in money matters." And resolutions were regularly passed to carry this into effect. There is one circumstance connected with this branch of this heterogeneous Association which must not be omitted; viz,—whilst these agitators divided the Leeds society through their opposition to an organ in Brunswick chapel, they occupied a chapel at Burnley, in which they had an organ and worshipped to the sound of its pipes! It was intimated that the organ was opposed principally because of an apprehension existing, that the "Church prayers" would follow it, and yet these *consistent* dissentients, in October 1829, made the following rule;—viz.—"That our brethren in London be allowed the use of Mr. Wesley's "Abridgment of the Liturgy, in their chapel, &c." I might enlarge considerably on this branch of the Association, but I fear you will think I shall occupy too extended a portion of your pages. Allow me to state, that on the other parts I shall not be so prolix. The second class in this Manchester combination, is composed of three persons from Oldham, who will perhaps be known the best by the designation of "Stephenites," from their leader, Mr. Joseph Rayner Stephens, who retired from the itinerant work, because his brethren would not allow him to unite the character of the political lecturer and agitator with that of a Christian minister. This secession was founded on dissatisfaction with the existing union between the church and the state!

July, 1835.

ALIIQUIS.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE INTENDED NEW CHAPEL.—The proceedings of "the quarterly meeting of the Liverpool North Circuit, held in the vestry of Brunswick Chapel, on Monday, June 23, 1834," are recorded in the Steward's book, in the hand-writing of that officer. They contain eight "resolutions" on the subject of this projected building; the second of which appoints ten gentlemen by name, to be "a committee" for the management of the "fund to be forthwith formed by voluntary subscription for the purpose of building this chapel." The *Lantern* says, page 304, respecting the writer of an article in our work, and

in reference to the above meeting—"If he was present, and means to assert that a vote of the meeting was taken upon the appointment of these 'managers,' or that the meeting was ever consulted at all on the subject, he utters what he knows to be an untruth; or—lies designedly." It is quite clear that somebody "lies designedly," and the public will judge whether it be the circuit book and the stewards, or the men who openly boast of having issued some hundreds of forgeries, under the name of "fac-simile" tickets.

REV. ROBERT AITKEN.—This gentleman, in a pamphlet recently published, has tendered his services as mediator between the contending parties. His project is to bring back that vile leaven of Antinomianism recently expelled from the connexion, to ferment and disturb it again. Although the polity of Methodism had cost Mr. Wesley fifty years of care, and was the subject on which Thompson, Mather, Pawson, and others, had bestowed their deep and ceaseless attention, it is now to be tinkered and improved by a young convert, who has so little leisure as to be unable to read over his manuscript before sending it to press. We very meekly submit to the censure passed upon us for our bad temper, as the mediator was like to show his impartiality. Mr. Aitken says he has met the Liverpool Association in a truly friendly and Christian spirit; and as, even "sinners, love those who love them," we suppose the good feeling must have been mutual. They have had one single interview, and a report of it has already appeared in the *Lantern*, but much more favourable to themselves than to him. It is said, the Rev. gentleman conceived it possible that he might be misrepresented, and has published the present pamphlet partly in self-defence. It is very kind certainly in Mr. Aitken to invite us to share in the advantages of such "peace," "brotherly love," and "Christian fellowship" as this; but some of us have had quite enough of "interviews" which end in a published report—which report may prove a malignant personal attack, and require to be met by a published defence; and so must say, "I pray thee have me excused."

We had intended to have given a detailed account of Dr. Warren's proceedings at Sheffield; but upon second thoughts we do not deem them worthy of this distinction. His lecture was even to its phraseology the same which he has been delivering in other towns; and his behaviour in the negotiations which some of our Sheffield friends had with him exhibits, the same combination of clumsy craft and cowardice which from the beginning of his reforming career he has shown. He was offered the use of one of our chapels that he might address an exclusively Wesleyan audience. But this liberal offer he refused. He was asked if he would allow the Wesleyans to speak in their own defence; but this liberty he would not grant. The Rev. J. M'Lean, after having listened to his slanders, and those of his associates, for the space of three hours, rose to reply; but although several Manchester men had been secretly sent for, and the audience had been packed by a private issue of tickets, the poor Doctor durst not risk an exposure. He and the whole set of his associates seemed panic-stricken when Mr. M'Lean stood up, and immediately escaped from the place in the most abrupt and cowardly manner. To save appearances, the Doctor announced by advertisement that he was favourable to discussion, but when Mr. M'Lean took him at his word, and offered to meet him in the presence of the Wesleyan Methodists of Sheffield, he professed to be highly offended with such a proposal—declaring, in plain terms, that the Wesleyan Methodists of Sheffield were as unable to judge fairly of his case as the members of "the notorious, the infamous, the disgraceful Manchester district meeting." Poor Dr. Warren, what will come next? He is now as distrustful of the Wesleyan laity as he has hitherto professed to be of the ministers. Even lay delegation will not meet his case! It is delightful to learn that our societies in Sheffield are in a most peaceful and united state. The friends have come forward with unprecedented liberality to accommodate the preachers at the approaching Conference; and it is confidently anticipated that a glorious effusion of the Spirit of God will be vouchsafed, in connexion with its sittings and services. The visit of the agitators has been beneficial. They have only succeeded in inducing one member to join their Association; whilst hundreds have been driven to more earnest prayer, and to take a more decided stand in favour of our long-tried and divinely-honoured institutions.

We feel no hesitation in informing our Warrington correspondent that his conjectures respecting the delegate from that town at the late *unfortunate* meeting of delegates in Manchester, are perfectly verified by fact. His present opposition to Wesleyan Methodism appears to have arisen from some disappointment which he experienced while resident in the Rotherham circuit. This delegate (so called), is neither connected with the town nor the Methodist society of Warrington; and for a long time we wondered what led him to leave his occupation on the Sankey canal to interfere with the affairs of a religious society to which he never belonged. We opine, that were certain phrenologists to interest themselves about his skull, the bump of *obtusiveness* would be found prominent. We can assure this gentleman that he will meet with no *game* in our Methodist preserves, which will recompense him for the trouble he and his associates may experience, and trust that he will profit by the things which he has already learned.

We inform our correspondent "Aliquis" that his papers are peculiarly acceptable; and we hope to receive a constant supply.

We regret exceedingly that an article respecting the outrageous proceedings of the Association at Whitehaven, and concerning the ludicrous figure which these worthies cut in the Isle of Man, on account of press of matter, are postponed until our next. These mischievous and misled men certainly are not aware that conduct similar to that which took place in the above places, is re-acting much to their disadvantage. Detestation and abhorrence are now the prevailing feelings toward the reckless and wicked Association.

To our Warrington correspondent we are under peculiar obligations, and shall not fail to make ample use of his correspondence in our future number.

We thankfully acknowledge communications from "Mentor;" "Delta;" "J. W.;" "Epsilon;" "A. B.;" "Q.;" "J. D.;" "C. J.;" "C. H. J.;" "A lover of Constitutional Methodism;" and "An Observer."

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE.

(From the Watchman.)

IN our last number we furnished our readers with a brief account of some of the early proceedings of the Conference assembled at Sheffield, and we now proceed to lay before them a more detailed statement of the deliberations of that venerable assembly. As we have already stated its sittings commenced on Wednesday the 29th of July, which day was chiefly occupied with the official and other arrangements which usually occupy the first day of the Conference, and with two public Prayer Meetings.

THURSDAY MORNING, JULY 30.

The Minutes of the Manchester Special District Meeting on the case of Dr. Warren were read.

During the reading of this document, it was stated to the President, that Mr. EMMETT, a preacher under suspension, was present in the Conference. He was requested to withdraw; but refused to do so. After he had been affectionately addressed by Mr. ENTWISTLE—the PRESIDENT stated that he was much surprised at Mr. Emmett's conduct; for that, during a period of 48 years, he had never seen any preacher behave in a similar way under such circumstances. At length he withdrew.

Mr. GRINDRON having finished reading the Manchester Minutes, the PRESIDENT enquired whether Dr. Warren appealed from the decision of the District Meeting to the Conference? To which Dr. WARREN replied, "Unquestionably; my presence here this day speaks this." The PRESIDENT then said, the Conference must decide whether a preacher who has neglected to give notice in the regular way, of his intention to appeal, has the right now to appeal? On this subject a long discussion took place, at the close of which the following resolutions were passed:—

1. That the *Notice of Appeal*, usual and fitting in such cases, has never been given.
2. That Dr. Warren has forfeited the right of *now* making his appeal to the Conference, by his having previously appealed, in violation of an established rule of our body, and of the injunction of the New Testament, to a civil jurisdiction; instead of appealing first to the Conference, according to our rules, and awaiting the result of their determination on his case, before he appealed elsewhere; as well as by connecting himself with a certain association formed and conducted in utter violation of the laws and of the peace of our Connexion; and, in conjunction with them, appealing to public meetings for the express purpose of agitating our Societies; this being done with the view, as he himself substantially admits, of enforcing on the Conference when it should assemble, by the pressure of an external influence, a decision favourable to his views.
3. That Dr. Warren has also forfeited the right of appeal by those calumnious, divisive, and mischievous proceedings, in various parts of the kingdom, during the last eight or nine months, which are now matters of public notoriety, and were altogether inconsistent with his duty, if he really considered himself still a Methodist Preacher, retaining the wish or intention to claim, by an appeal to the Conference or otherwise, any of the rights and privileges connected with a ministerial relation to our body.

These grounds for maintaining the opinion that Dr. Warren has forfeited the right of appeal were stated by the President to Dr. Warren, and he was heard in reply.

The Conference resolves on this part of the case:—

That, on the three grounds above mentioned, Dr. Warren has, in the judgment of the Conference, clearly and entirely forfeited the *right* of appeal in the present stage of these proceedings. But that, under all circumstances, and as a matter, not of right or justice, but of indulgence, the objections shall in this instance be waived: and the Conference will hear both the District Committee and the parties who may think themselves aggrieved by Dr. Warren's proceedings on the one hand, and Dr. Warren himself or any member of the Conference favourable to his views on the other hand, in reference to the whole of these unhappy transactions up to the present period, all merely technical and formal objections being dismissed on both sides, and regard being had entirely to the substantial merits of the case. But that the deviation, on this instance from our ordinary rules and requirements, though consented to by the District Committee, is considered by the Conference as being made solely in the way of indulgence on a peculiar occasion, and shall not, on any account, be drawn into a precedent.

In conformity with the preceding decision the Conference then entered on the careful consideration of Dr. Warren's appeal, and of the transactions on both sides, from the commencement of the proceedings of the District Committee up to the present period.

The official statement of the Manchester District Committee, containing their views and resolutions on the various parts of Dr. Warren's case, was read to the Conference. He was then heard at great length in his own defence; and, at his request, Mr. Bromley was also heard on his behalf. After some of the members of the Manchester District Committee had spoken on points referred to in the defence, and after several questions calculated to elicit more fully the facts of the case had been proposed by other members of the Conference, and Dr. Warren had been allowed full opportunity to answer and explain accordingly, he was told that, if he had any further remarks to offer, the Conference was ready to hear him. He declined, however, to say more on the subject.

Mr. GRINDROD then proceeded to give a statement of the whole case on the part of the Manchester District Meeting.

Dr. WARREN—I rise to order. If any charges are to be brought against me arising from transactions which have taken place subsequent to my suspension, ought I not to have received previous notice of such charges?

PRESIDENT—In all ordinary cases this is the rule; but in the resolution which has just been adopted, it is explicitly stated, that all technical objections as to mere formalities, are to be given up on both sides, of which arrangement you approved.

The Doctor then withdrew his objection.

Mr. GRINDROD then read the new matter in the statement, together with the Minutes of the regular District Meeting which was held in May.

Dr. WARREN rose exactly at twelve in order to reply. He commenced by complaining of the number of charges preferred against him. He spoke of his attachment to Methodism, and of his unwillingness to leave the Connexion. He entered also at great length into the various circumstances connected with the Special District Meeting at Manchester—the Juvenile Missionary Society connected with the Oldham-street Circuit—and stated the reasons which induced him and his partizans to form the Grand Central Association. He complained that no attention had been paid to their representations. Dr. Warren, in conclusion, stated his fixed determination to stand or fall with the Central Association; and to maintain to the utmost of his power the principles which the members of that combination have avowed.

The Ex-PRESIDENT said he had met with promptitude every case of grievance that had been mentioned to him.

Dr. WARREN—Some of your Superintendents have closed up the only avenue—the Quarterly Meeting—by which they could have reached your ear; when matters of grievance have been introduced into the Quarterly Meetings, they have said, we cannot admit them. They have acted in such a way as Mr. Taylor's piety and good sense would never approve. What remained? Either they must be quiet and say nothing at all, or express their opinions elsewhere. In this latter case, they are declared schismatics, and are separated from society. Between these two horns of a dilemma, hundreds and thousands of your people have been cut off.

Dr. BUNTING—One of these horns is of their own making; and if they have run upon it, it must be because they have a strange propensity to be gored. There was a regular mode of redress open to them. An aggrieved member should have appealed to the Chairman of the District, and then, should he have refused redress, he should bring him here, and we would teach such a Chairman his duty, and make him promise to do better. There are some points in Dr. Warren's address on which Mr. Newton, had he been present, would have made some remarks. One is, that a charge of fraud and trickery has been preferred against the Conference, in reference to the plan of Pacification not being found in the journals. Now, certainly, we modern preachers are not answerable for this any more than we are answerable for journals of events, of which we never heard. Nor do I think that we are compelled to impute fraud to our predecessors—to the Pawsons, and Mathers, and Bensons, and Bradburns, and Cokes, and Clarkes—yes, Clarke! whose name has been brought against us, as if he were indignant at our wickedness—and the Moores—for Henry Moore belongs to the age of which I speak; I say, I think we may explain the matter, without imputing fraud to those honoured men who were, in that day, entrusted with the affairs of Methodism.—Their characters, their lives, their deaths, forbid the imputation of trickery and fraud to them. Another point taken up by Dr. Warren is, that we who are now enquiring into this case are prejudiced men—that our having signed the Declaration has committed us to one side of the question. Now, the truth is, that the document in question says not a word about Dr. Warren. It contains only general principles, and I could

very consistently have signed that document at the time I did, and still, if I found sufficient reason, on investigating Dr. Warren's case as it stood when that Declaration was adopted, pronounced a verdict of acquittal on Dr. Warren, and censure on the District Meeting.

Mr. WAUGH—I feel great interest in one question, which I beg to propose to Dr. Warren. Did he say that the Ex-President, Mr. Taylor, is a man of piety and good sense, and averse to arbitrary proceedings?

Dr. WARREN—I did.

Mr. WAUGH—Then he is not like Judge Jeffries.

[Mr. W. alluded to that part of Dr. Warren's pamphlet, in which he compares the Ex-President to that infamous Judge.]

FRIDAY MORNING.

In compliance with a wish expressed by Dr. Warren, Mr. BROMLEY addressed the Conference on his behalf, and explained certain facts connected with the Manchester Special District Meeting.

After Mr. Bromley had concluded his speech, several preachers addressed the Conference, amongst whom the venerable JAMES WOOD (the oldest minister of the Connexion), stated—As a Member of the Methodist Conference, I have been charged as an oppressor, as trampling on the liberties of the people. Dr. Warren is the person bringing the charge. I care nothing for myself, but I cannot hear my brethren slandered without sympathy and indignation. In all my life I never knew, in any Conference, nor in any case, such a mass of inconsistency, of vanity, pride, and ambition, and, above, all, of malignity against the body, as I have witnessed from Dr. Warren on this occasion. I believe that his conduct in going from place to place, and agitating large bodies is inconsistent with justice, truth, and the simplicity of the gospel.

Mr. BEAUMONT—I wish to ask Dr. Warren, before he retires, whether he is willing to express his sorrow for the steps he has taken since his suspension? I am anxious to know whether he feels any regret, or any portion of regret, for what he has done?

Nothing satisfactory was elicited in reply to this question.

Dr. WARREN having stated, in reply to a question from the President, that he had nothing further to say in his defence, was requested to retire—with which request he immediately complied, it having been previously intimated that the Members of the Manchester District would not be allowed to speak or vote on the case. Dr. Bunting stated that he also intended to take no part in it.

After Dr. Warren had withdrawn, several preachers addressed the Conference at great length on the different subjects connected with his case. We regret that our limits do not allow us to furnish our readers with more than an outline of two or three of these addresses.

Mr. GALLAND stated that he now doubted whether he was right in withholding his name from the General Declaration which almost all his brethren had signed. He was convinced of the propriety of Dr. Warren's suspension, and expressed the strongest disapprobation of the conduct of that individual, which, he stated, had been of such a nature, that even if he had expressed regret for it, it would be the duty of the Conference to expel him. Another reason, which he (Mr. G.), wished to take a part in this business was, the probable reproach and calumny which might arise from the misrepresentations that would be circulated, respecting their just and righteous decision. He was willing to share in the reproach of his brethren, and in such a cause would say, "All hail reproach, and welcome shame!"

Mr. BROMLEY spoke in favour of Dr. Warren, but his speech was rather a defence of his own conduct than of that of the appellant. He did not attempt to justify any of the proceedings of Dr. W., and condemned many of them. He was, however, opposed to his expulsion, and urged that it would be good policy to continue his suspension another year.

SATURDAY MORNING.

After the Conference had, as usual, been opened with singing and prayer, the consideration of the case of Dr. Warren was resumed.

Mr. LESSEY delivered an impressive speech, in which he depicted the evils that would result to the Connexion if Dr. Warren should be permitted to retain his place as a Minister of the Connexion.

Mr. DIXON rose and said—I have found it difficult to subdue my mind to that calmness which is proper in coming to a judgment on the conduct of a person who was once a brother. Whatever be the result of this struggle, I have determined to fight

with you the last battle, and to die with you in the last ditch. But, sir, I have no fear as to the result of this trial of our faith. From this time I am sure we shall love each other better, our misunderstandings will be made up, and we shall agree to act in concert on the great principles of Methodism. In this case, in my judgment, we have no alternative but expulsion, or the destruction of Methodism. I have endeavoured to fish out of a great deal of sophistry, brought out during the examination, the real state of the Doctor's case. He said he had lived up to this time in all good conscience. How he can have done this, I am at a loss to understand. Has he not maligned the characters of some of your best men, and done all he possibly could to render them odious? Has he not injured the piety of some of your spiritually-minded members, and spread discord and confusion throughout the Connexion? Look too, sir, at the principles of the Association. This is a great and wicked confederacy. I hold Dr. Warren accountable for all the mischief done at Liverpool. His conduct has been denominated irregularity. And are we to call such conduct as that which has been under examination, mere irregularity? We have heard much of the doctrine of expediency;—it is doubtless a popular doctrine;—but what, I ask, is the expediency of the New Testament? I understand it to be this—to do a right thing in a right way. And is such expediency discoverable in the conduct of Dr. Warren? He will not adhere to your Deed-poll; he tells you he objects to your doctrine of usage. Now, are you prepared to yield to him in these particulars? Are you to show mercy to a man who has set up a kingdom within your kingdom? The principles of the Association have been carried into awful effect in a few of our Circuits; and the evils done by Dr. Warren deserves a thousand expulsions.

Mr. SCOTT, amid cries of question, rose and said—It would do them no discredit to spend so much time on a subject of such great importance. He had attentively noticed every thing which had fallen from Dr. Warren since he appeared before the Conference, and had studied the subject throughout the year. No doubt could be entertained as to the decision; but it was necessary to be cautious as to the mode. He was pleased with the moral courage displayed by Mr. Galland, and would be glad if the same feeling pervaded every mind. He had attentively waited to hear some reason for the agitation which all deplored, but could discover no *principle*. Dr. Warren spoke of the necessity of setting himself right with the body which, he alleged, had misunderstood him; and from this little point of vanity he had ventured to disturb the Connexion. He advanced to fresh ground, but when additional pretences were adopted, they developed no *principle*. The Doctor had vacillated and shifted from one thing to another; and that in a spirit any thing but manly and dignified. Who could respect a man capable of this? As to the modes adopted by Dr. W. in compassing his purpose, they were such as every man of candour must disapprove. He had violated the sacred proprieties of civility—he had trampled on the spirit, laws, and usages of Methodism. He would now ask, to what circuit could he be sent with safety? He would further demand, what preacher would they station with him? Never did a man, bearing the name of a Methodist preacher, go to such unwarrantable lengths. He concluded by expressing his readiness to vote for Dr. W.'s expulsion.

Mr. ROBERT WOOD read a letter addressed by his father in November last, to Dr. Warren, in which he tells the Doctor that he would not have his responsibility upon him for the wealth of all the world, and affectionately entreats him to repent. "If you will give hope of this," he says, "I will come, notwithstanding all my infirmities, to Manchester, and kneel at your feet to gain this point."

After the Preachers had expressed their sentiments, the Conference with one exception (and he afterwards withdrew his opposition) unanimously resolved as follows:—

I.—That the District Committee, at their special Meetings on this case, have not exceeded nor misapplied that right of jurisdiction, according to the laws and usages of the Connexion, which two decisions in the Courts of Equity have been recognised; but their proceedings were proper and regular, and required by the circumstances of the case:—For,

1. Had the District Committee omitted to call Dr. Warren to account, they would have been guilty of a dereliction of duty; because,

The New Testament, which we regard as our supreme and permanent law, enjoins that we watch over each other, and exercise vigilant and mutual controul; and because,

It is indispensably necessary to the purity of our ministry, and the spiritual welfare of our societies to retain, and on all proper occasions to use, the *right* of fully enquiring into the conduct of its own members, and judicially dealing with them, which the Conference in its annual assemblies, and (during the periods intervening between its yearly meetings), by means of its District Committees, has hitherto exercised. And,

2. The grounds on which Dr. Warren refused to continue on his trial, before the District Committee specially assembled for the purpose, were, in the judgment of the Conference, insufficient and untenable; and for so refusing, the District Committee were in duty bound to suspend his functions as an accredited minister of our Connexion; because,

To allow or connive at such contumacy, is incompatible with the nature and principles of society in general, and with the constitution and discipline of our Connexion in particular; for if, on any occasion, or under any pretext, a preacher were allowed to refuse trial, and

thus to elude investigation, and to evade that reproof, admonition, and brotherly control, which a District Committee should deem it right to administer, our people could have no security for the purity of our ministry, either as to doctrine or life.

The decision of the District Committee, suspending the ministerial functions of Dr. Warren, until he should submit to take his trial, is, therefore, approved and confirmed by the Conference.

II.—That, in the judgment of the Conference, the following facts have been fully proved :—

1. That, by various publications and speeches, Dr. Warren has most unjustly and inexcusably defamed and slandered the character of many preachers and official members of the Connexion individually, and of the District Committee and the Conference collectively.

2. That he has committed numerous flagrant offences against the essential principles of our connexional union, by overt acts directly tending to subvert the constitution, and to destroy the purity, the peace, and—eventually—even the existence of our united societies: especially—

By having concurred in organizing an *association*, or combination, opposed to the discipline of our societies, and united for the avowed purpose of effecting great and subversive changes in our general system:

By joining with others in the same combination, to establish separate assemblies and places of worship: and by arranging and publishing a plan for religious services in those separate places of worship; in direct and contemptuous opposition to the lawful authority which had placed him under suspension:

By co-operating with the combination aforesaid, in convening and addressing mixed assemblies, for the purpose of destroying all confidence in the Conference, and disturbing and dividing our Societies:

By uniting and assisting, in particular, at a late meeting of persons calling themselves “Delegates;” at which meeting “Resolutions and Propositions,” opposed to the essential principles of the Connexion were adopted, and measures of disturbance and division were concerted: and—

By continuing, notwithstanding the decision of the Vice-Chancellor, and of the Lord Chancellor, to resist, and in various ways seeking to overturn, the discipline of the Connexion:

3. That, in numerous instances, his conduct and proceedings are gross and palpable violations of the principles and precepts of the New Testament.

III.—On these, and similar other grounds, Dr. Warren, so far from having manifested any contrition for his many offences, or expressed any intention or disposition to abandon the evil courses which he has so injuriously pursued, has, on the contrary, plainly avowed his determination to persist in the views and purposes expressed by him in a certain published letter, and in a note to the fourth edition of his pamphlet; and has, in various ways, declared to the Conference, that it could not retain his services without consenting to make such alterations in our long-established constitution and discipline, as the Conference deems to be great and essential:—the Conference unanimously judges and resolves that it cannot, with Christian propriety and fidelity, allow Dr. Samuel Warren to have any longer a place as a preacher in our Connexion; he is, therefore, hereby accordingly expelled.

The PRESIDENT announced, that in pursuance of the decision of Conference, he had sent a note to Dr. Warren, to inform him of the resolution which had been passed on his case, and to say, that it should be left to his own feelings, either to appear again in the Conference to receive his sentence, or not. His reply was, that he would await the call of the President to attend the Conference, and receive his sentence in form.

The PRESIDENT informed the Conference that he yesterday received a letter, signed George Cookman and Ralph Grindrod, requesting, on the part of certain persons calling themselves Wesleyan Delegates, to know at what hour this day it would be convenient to Conference to receive their Address. To which he had replied that he would lay their letter before the Conference, and take their opinion thereon.

He also stated, that he had received a second note, signed by the same individuals, requesting that the final answer of the Conference might be given this day.

It was the opinion of the Conference that the parties should be informed of the usual mode in which addresses or memorials are introduced to the Conference.

The rest of Saturday was employed in the investigation of characters.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2.

All the religious services appointed for this day were unusually well attended.—The principal chapels were crowded with attentive and devout auditories, and a very gracious influence accompanied the delivery of the gospel message by the servants of the Lord. They were indeed seasons of refreshing from the divine presence, and were hailed by preachers and people as a token for good.

MONDAY, AUGUST 3.

The examination of the characters of preachers was renewed.

The Address from the Delegates of the Grand Central Association was read and a committee appointed to prepare an answer.

In the afternoon, Dr. WARREN was called in; and addressed by the PRESIDENT in nearly the following words:—“I am quite sure that every member of this Conference feels the importance and solemnity of the present occasion. The duty which I have now to perform is of so painful a nature, that I greatly regret, on my own account, that the Doctor insists on having the decision of the Conference in his case pronounced before him from the chair. I was acquainted with the parents of Dr. Warren, during

an early period of my public life, and have known him since he was a little boy. And since he has commenced his ministerial career, I have felt a deep interest in his happiness, usefulness, and honour. Little did I ever think it would have fallen to my lot to perform a duty so distressing to myself, and so humiliating to Dr. Warren, as the one in which I am now engaged."....[Here the President alluded, in a very feeling manner, to his recollections of Dr. Warren's former wife, and bore an honorable testimony to the amiable, exemplary, and useful character of that excellent woman. He also stated, that these recollections heightened the sorrowful feelings which he experienced on the present occasion. He then proceeded to remark,]—"Dr. Warren travelled with me two years in Kent, and conducted himself in a very becoming manner, as my helper in the work of the Lord. Since then, I have regretted to observe in Dr. Warren, on some occasions, a spirit and conduct which to me was quite inexplicable; especially in the Committee which was appointed by the Conference to consider the expediency of providing a Theological Institution for the improvement of the junior preachers. From that period up to the present hour, Dr. Warren's course has excited my surprise and regret—as well as my entire disapprobation and condemnation. I am sure, that I only speak the sentiments of all the members of this Conference, when I say, that it would afford us the purest satisfaction to observe a change for the better.—Now, however, I have only, in obedience to the order of this Conference, to pronounce its decision in the hearing of Dr. Warren; and, painful as the duty is, I am bound to perform it. This Conference, after a full consideration of your case, has decided, by a solemn vote, that you, Dr. Samuel Warren, be forthwith expelled from this Connexion, and you are so expelled accordingly."

Dr. WARREN in reply, acknowledged the affectionate manner of the President—protested against what he called the assumption of unscriptural power on the part of the preachers—and expressed his strong disapprobation of their public conduct. He concluded by observing;—"I will not obtrude further remarks, but will add this brief sentiment, that however erroneous you may think me to be, I do absolutely consider that my sentence is not a just and constitutional one. I think I have proved it in my defence, and I do, therefore, enter my solemn protest against the vote of the Conference. I think I have been unjustly deprived of my fraternal inheritance, and shall do my best to recover it.

The case of ROBERT EMMETT, a supernumerary, who has also connected himself, with the Grand Central Association, and has endeavoured to disturb the harmony of our societies in various places, was taken into consideration; and, after a full and careful examination, the Conference unanimously resolved that he should be expelled from the body.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 4.

Committees were appointed to prepare the Pastoral Address and the Reply to the Address from the Irish and Canadian Conferences.

ROBERT EMMETT was called in to hear the decision of Conference in his case; and was addressed by the President in the following terms:—"Your case has been attentively, candidly, and largely considered. Though in the gross and commonly understood sense of the term, you are not guilty of immorality, yet it is the opinion of the Conference, that to sow discord among brethren—to promote strife in our societies and to foster and encourage the custom of speaking evil of ministers, is a great violation of all the laws of scriptural morality. The Conference having thus considered your case, have imposed upon me the painful duty of informing you, that by a unanimous vote you are expelled from the body. My advice is, that you retrace your steps, and recover the ground on which you stood when you were cordially united with your brethren, and when you were zealous in the cause of Christ. If any word that I should say, would restore you to this state of mind, I would greatly rejoice."

Mr. AVERILL, who had been regularly suspended by a District Meeting, for promoting the purposes of the Central Association, was called in. The charges against him were of an aggravated description, involving the accomplishment, in a great degree, of the ruin of the Camelford circuit; and no just reasons appearing for granting him the privilege of appeal, the Conference, after reviewing the circumstances, unanimously resolved on his expulsion.

The Conference proceeded with the examination of characters, and various explanations were given of matters concerning which erroneous statements had gone abroad. In particular, Dr. Bunting and Mr. Newton adverted to what had been reported in reference to their supposed interference with the election for South Devon, with which they had no concern whatever.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5.

The whole of the day was occupied with Mr. Bromley's case, against whom complaints were preferred in reference to numerous alleged instances of his rash and injurious connexion, by words and acts, with the agitations of the past year.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6.

Mr. BROMLEY entered upon his defence, in the course of which he acknowledged that his conduct, in many instances, had been imprudent, and avowed that a change had taken place in his opinions and feelings, in reference to some of the transactions which had been brought under the consideration of the Conference; and he promised that, in future, his brethren should not have cause to complain of him. After a long discussion, the Conference resolved that, in consideration of the acknowledgments that Mr. Bromley had made, and the pledges that he had given that he would cordially unite with his brethren, and faithfully support the decisions of the Conference and the existing system of Methodism, he should be continued as a fellow-labourer in the gospel.

The Address of the Conference to the self-styled "Delegates," inserted in a subsequent column, was read, and unanimously passed the vote of Conference.

A letter from Isaac Crowther, Esq., inclosing a cheque for £500 towards the funds of the Theological Institution, was then read, for which the cordial and unanimous thanks of the Conference were expressed, with a request of their being tendered to that benevolent gentleman.

The cases of Dr. Warren and others, as well as the replies to the "Delegates," having occupied several days, it was found necessary for the Conference to resume its sittings this evening at six o'clock.

Permission was granted by the Conference to the trustees of St. George's chapel in the East, Bolton, Huddersfield, and Bedford, to erect an organ in their respective chapels.

The case of Mr. GORDON, who, as our readers are aware, has been particularly active in the late anti-Methodistical agitation, was introduced; and, after reading various documents on the subject, it was unanimously agreed that his resignation shall be accepted by the Conference.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7.

Some other cases of inquiry, as to the conduct of the preachers during the past year, were disposed of in the course of the morning.

In the afternoon, Dr. BUNTING repeated the substance of what he had said at the meeting of laymen, on the Friday preceding the Conference.

In the evening session, the character and qualifications of the young men who are recommended by their respective Quarterly and District Meetings were laid before the Conference.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8.

Until noon, the Conference was occupied with the examination of young men proposed to travel. There was no evening sitting.

MONDAY, AUGUST 10.

The Conference was occupied in receiving the reports of the District Committees on the examinations of the young men recommended to be now received on trial. The total number of candidates accepted by the Conference, to be employed in the regular work at home or abroad, is 82. Of this number, 31 have offered themselves more especially for the Missionary work. Nine candidates, recommended by the Foreign Districts, have also been approved of by the Conference, and placed on the list as Assistant Missionaries on trial.

It was unanimously resolved—"That the Ex-PRESIDENT should be earnestly requested to publish the excellent charge which he addressed to the junior preachers who were ordained on Wednesday evening;—"That the Rev. Messrs. DIXON and LESSEY be requested to publish the sermons which they preached yesterday in the Carver-street chapel; and that Mr. HANNAH also be requested to publish the two sermons delivered by him on the last two Sabbaths.

The question relating to Supernumeraries wishing to be appointed to circuits the ensuing year, having been considered, the Conference proceeded to an investigation of the state of the circuits, with a view to determine what requests for additional preachers should be met. A most interesting account was given respecting the Orkney Islands, and the extreme solicitude of the inhabitants to have Wesleyan preachers stationed among them. The Conference agreed that two should be sent. The entire number of additional preachers to be employed in the home work next year is 31.

In the afternoon, the Stationing Committee retired for the purpose of re-considering and making the necessary alterations in the rough draught for the appointments of the preachers for the ensuing year. In the mean time, the Conference was occupied with several minor matters of business.

THE ORDINATION.

One of the most interesting public services of the Annual Conference is the Ordination, or admission into full connexion of those junior preachers who have completed the usual term of probation. On the present occasion, sixteen individuals were thus solemnly set apart to the public ministry of the gospel at home; namely—Messrs. Coulson, Rogerson, jun., Maxwell, Clarke, Cooper, Peterson, Joll, Rossell, Hughes, jun., Monkhouse, Simon, Bedford, Walker, Brownell, Hall, and Kipling. Five others, who have been several years employed on Foreign Mission stations, being at present in this country, attended the Conference, and received a public recognition. The evening of Monday, the 3rd instant, and the following (Tuesday) evening, were occupied with the usual preparatory examination; and several of the candidates gave an interesting account of their conversion from sin and call to the ministry. We have only room to notice particularly some of the statements which were made:—

JAMES COX stated that he was born in the island of Bermuda, and educated in strict attendance on the services of the Established Church. From his childhood he had been a subject of serious impressions. The fear of God restrained him from gross immoralities, and urged him to the performance of religious duties. Abstinence from outward acts of immorality, and a diligent observance of religious exercises, generated a spirit of pharisaism, which became deeply rooted within him, and he remained utterly ignorant of the nature of true religion and the simple way of obtaining it by faith in Christ. It was by the blessing of God on the perusal of the Scriptures, that he was at length fully convinced of his utter destitution of experimental godliness. A variety of passages, descriptive of that filial confidence in God which his people enjoy, were mainly instrumental in producing this conviction, and subverting his self-righteous hopes. He became fully convinced of sin, and trembled before God; but how to obtain the divine favour he did not know; his views of salvation by faith were very indistinct. At this interesting crisis, he became acquainted with the Rev. James Dunbar, Wesleyan Missionary in Bermuda. To the kind and judicious counsels, and pulpit ministrations of Mr. Dunbar he was greatly indebted. He became more earnest in prayer for the promised salvation of the Gospel, till one evening, while walking with a young friend now in heaven, he was enabled to exercise faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ, and had the pardoning love of God shed abroad in his heart. While "seeking the Lord," he was deeply impressed with the idea that he should eventually become a preacher of the gospel, but strove to repress the thought, lest it should proceed from vanity. After some time, he was employed by Mr. Dunbar as a local preacher, and while thus engaged, the impression on his mind strengthened into a conviction that he was called to devote himself unto the work of the ministry. Having been examined and recommended by the Antigua District Meeting, he received an appointment by the Conference to a Mission station in the Antigua District. The difficulties and temptations which he experienced in the commencement of his public career, were succeeded by a calm and settled conviction that the Lord had directed his course. He had laboured 12 years in those interesting fields of missionary toil, which the West Indies present; and while contemplating the future, he felt something of the spirit of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, when he said—"Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel."

SAMUEL HARDEY said—"By the grace of God, I am what I am." If I differ from the vilest and the worst, it is the grace of God which has made that difference; and this circumstance proves that God "hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner." My conversion to God was as follows. Being born of religious parents, and having had a strictly religious education, I was, at a very early period of life, a subject of gracious impressions, and of the convincing, correcting, and reproving influences of the Holy Spirit. It was not, however, till I had reached the fourteenth year of my age that I was deeply convinced of my sinful condition, and of my need of personal salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. By a serious affliction, which brought me to the margin of the grave, I was led to cry for mercy, and earnestly to seek the pardon of my sins. With my recovery to health, my convictions deepened, and my distress of mind became almost insufferable. For four months I wept and was in bitterness, and had no hope, peace, or joy. In the distress of this moment, I "entered into my closet, shut the door, and prayed unto my Father who seeth in secret," and pleaded the "exceeding great and precious promises" of his holy word; one especially was presented as the object of my faith, namely—"The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach. That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Here I saw the blessing I wanted, and found the Saviour I sought. I had power to believe in Christ as having died in my room and stead, and, believing, could "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Then I ob-

tained peace with God—could joy in God—had access to God—and, above all, received the witness of the Spirit of God to bear a direct and explicit testimony with my spirit that I was a child of God. Then my heart was regenerated;—the great work of sanctification commenced;—and up to this moment has been progressively advancing, and I am now going on to perfection. As holiness, happiness, and usefulness are inseparately connected, I have ever kept in view, as the object of my calling, “holiness to the Lord.” My call to become a minister of the gospel originated in an impression that I was inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to take upon me that sacred office, and the way being clearly opened I commenced in the character of a local preacher. After labouring in that capacity for four years, I was called by the church to enter more fully into the work of the ministry, and being recommended from the circuit in which I resided to the Hull District Meeting, I was there examined and received in the usual way. But my call was not only to preach the gospel to my fellow creatures in general, but to the heathen world in particular. This impression was clear and distinct; and, believing that it came from God, I acted upon it, and offered myself to the Mission cause. In the year 1828, I embarked for Madras; and after a long, painful, and trying voyage of seven months, in which I was graciously preserved, I safely arrived in India in January, 1829. During this period, I had many opportunities of testing the genuineness of my zeal, and the fervency of my love; and thankful I am to say, that I never had a misgiving as to the reality of my call; and during the six years I lived and laboured in India—in sufferings and in trials, in perils by sea and by land—I always felt the truth and reality of that gracious promise, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” I have the prospect of soon going again to that distant part of the world, nothing doubting but God hath sent me; and whether sickness or health, adversity or prosperity, honour or dishonour, life or death, all will be well; for “I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.”—“Brethren pray for me.”

ELLIS HALL—Ever since I can recollect, I have had those good desires and intentions which the children of pious parents generally experience. My father punished every moral delinquency of which he knew me to be guilty with a severity which, when compared with the indulgence he always shewed to lesser faults, marked upon my mind the exceeding sinfulness of sin. He sought at these times especially to substitute the fear of offending God for that of the punishment he himself inflicted, as a restraint more rational, more powerful, and more pleasing to *Him* with whom I had to do. But I am principally indebted to my dear mother, whose spirit has since passed into the skies, for the care that was taken to bring me to an early acquaintance with the Saviour of sinners. I well remember the pains she took to render her society more agreeable than that of some forbidden companion, and the means by which she endeavoured to elicit the state of my heart when the Holy Ghost began to draw me into friendship with himself; and I do believe, had I not been blessed with such a mother, I should not now have been what I am and where I am. When about fifteen years of age, I began seriously and anxiously to inquire, what shall I do to be saved? Mr. Pilter was at that time stationed in my native town, and I have much reason to bless God that I heard sermons from him which I then wondered any could hear without trembling; but I was not soon fully delivered from the spirit of procrastination. I felt no unwillingness to entertain a painful apprehension of my danger, for I had long dreaded being forsaken of the Spirit of God, and regarded these strivings of conscience as a pleasing indication that he had not given me up to the hardness of my heart. The hinderances to my salvation were all within myself. I had no costly or painful sacrifice to make—no wicked companion to abandon, my associates were all serious—no persecution to dread. I knew my conversion would be a subject of great joy to all from whom I had any thing to hope or fear—my external circumstances were favourable to that internal change which I longed to experience. I saw the necessity of submitting to, and the advantage of believing in, the Lord Jesus Christ. But I knew not the freeness of gospel mercy; I thought myself at a great distance when in reality I was not far from the kingdom of heaven. I had often listened, and always with intense interest, to a description of those terrors which compel the awakened to seek immediate refuge in the outstretched arms of the Redeemer, and I waited to realize in my own mind this deep and distressing sense of instant danger. Believing it indispensable to a sound and scriptural conversion, I looked with suspicion upon those who professed the enjoyment of a peace that had not been preceded by this great distress as being but slightly healed.—It was my determination never to rest until I had first felt all the anguish of a wounded spirit. I did not venture to think of pardon as of possible attainment to one whose strongest feeling was not terror of the punishment denounced against sin, but an anxious desire to be made partaker of God’s favour; and though I was brought at last to own the folly of building my hopes upon such a foundation as this, it was long be-

fore I discerned the way of faith so clearly as to avail myself of it, and often did I wish that some more definite and tangible condition had been prescribed, and then I could at once have given to the winds my doubts and fears; for there is no possible privation, or pain, or toil that could have been mentioned as the price of a certain salvation from which I should have shrunk a moment. I remained in this state for fourteen months. During this time, I was sometimes in an agony of desire, and sometimes languid and careless—sometimes blessed with hope, almost amounting to the confidence of faith, and sometimes nearly overwhelmed with despair. I failed to obtain the blessing in the public ordinances of the sanctuary, because I could not, as my feelings disposed me to do, break out in agonizing cries; and in private it was suggested that salvation must needs be nearer when pleaded for by men who had power with God. At length came the time of deliverance, and then I was astonished I could have been wandering so long and so near to the place of rest without finding it. It was not in any public means of grace—not under any peculiarly exciting or melting influence—but at the close of one of the most comfortless days I ever spent. I was alone one evening musing upon my wretchedness, when I was enabled as in a moment to believe in Christ as having died for me. The change which resulted was glorious indeed. Ignorance, hardness, unbelief were gone. I could now weep; my very soul was melted into tenderness before the Lord; and to this hour the remembrance of that season begets stronger emotions in my heart than the recollection of any other event of my life.—When I awoke the following morning, released from that bondage under which I had so long and so grievously mourned, my first sensations were those of pleasurable surprise. I asked myself what had transpired to create this change. It was not the recollection of the event that produced the joy, but it was the feeling of joy that recalled to my mind the event. My evidence since that time has not been always clear, nor has my joy been without interruption; but I have not remained long in gloom and despondency. At present, I have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and am resolved to spend my all in that work of the Christian ministry to which I am fully persuaded the great Head of the Church has called me, that I can at all times look up to him for the fulfilment of that promise—"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

On WEDNESDAY evening, the Carver-street chapel was again crowded to excess at an early hour. At six o'clock the PRESIDENT opened the services with the hymn,

"Give me the faith which can remove, &c."

and called upon two of the senior preachers to engage in prayer. Having then read the list of those preachers who were to be admitted into full connexion, he proceeded to make a series of weighty and impressive observations on the Divine origin of the Christian ministry—on the great characters which it has produced—on the necessity of being prepared for this ministry by a "birth from above"—and on its great design.—He expressed the great satisfaction which he had derived from the previous examination of the candidates, and which, he doubted not, would now be shared by the congregation.

The PRESIDENT then proceeded to ask the usual ordination questions, to every one of which the candidates severally responded in a satisfactory manner. This part of the business having been gone through,

The Rev. RICHARD TREFFRY, being called upon by the President rose and said:—Mr. President, I have had the pleasure of knowing several of these young men, to whom you have been addressing yourself, for some years; and I also had an opportunity of being present when you examined them in private, in reference to their personal experience—their knowledge of our doctrines—and their call to the Christian ministry. I have every reason to believe that they possess genuine piety, that they have been savingly and soundly converted to God. You know, sir, and this Conference knows, that we deem this the first qualification for a Christian minister; that whatever other endowments he may possess, if he do not enjoy the grace of God, and, "taste the powers of the world to come," he will be totally incompetent for the office he assumes. I believe these young men are truly converted to God, regenerated, "born again" of the "incorruptible seed" of that "word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." I am glad to find that many of them have been converted from their early youth, and that several of them under God, owe that change to the influence of Christian parents. I have remarked, indeed, that the greater part of them were brought to God by means of this instrumentality. Not fewer than four of them are children of Methodist preachers. I am gratified to find that our children are rising up "instead of their fathers;" that they came in at the right door, and are determined to walk in the right way. And I also believe that they have a correct knowledge of the great and peculiar doctrines of Christianity. You have carefully examined them on this important subject. Personal piety is not the only qualification for a minister of the gospel:

he should likewise be well acquainted with Christian doctrines, and to know the great truths of our holy religion which he is called to preach. I further believe that they are called of God to preach the gospel; and that God himself has successfully employed them in the administration of Christian truth. For these reasons, I feel very great pleasure in moving that these young men be received into full connexion with the Conference.

The Rev. THEOPHILUS LESSEY, on being desired by the President to second the resolution, spoke as follows:—I rise, Mr. President, at your call, with considerable emotion, to second the resolution which has just been proposed to you. The present must be acknowledged to be one of the most solemn occasions on which we could assemble. Our hearts are deeply engaged. I am very thankful to be able to concur, most entirely and cordially, in the views which my esteemed friend, Mr. Treffry, has given of the personal piety of these young men, into whose hands we are going to put the pastoral crook. I am thoroughly satisfied that they love our Lord Jesus Christ.—This I feel to be the first great paramount principle in the formation of the character of Christians and of Christian Ministers. Other attainments are necessary; but this is the prime and indispensable element of the whole. “Lovest thou me?” said our Lord to Peter. He thrice propounded the question, and thrice gave the momentous injunction, “Feed my sheep; feed my lambs.” It is with the utmost satisfaction that we send men into the pasturage, where the sheep of Christ are fed, who are full of that love which animated the Redeemer himself, which produced these sheep, and which glowed in the hearts of the Apostles. I rejoice to know that these young men have already been approved. Some of them, in remote and distant parts of the world, have been gathering holy offerings to the Lord. They have been eminently successful in “winning souls” to Christ: and their “record is on high.” We gladly receive those whom the great Head of the Church has already so abundantly honoured in turning pagans to the knowledge of himself. The rest have laboured at home, and have not laboured in vain. They have had seals to their ministry, which we gratefully regard as a pledge and assurance that the Lord will still bless them. I rejoice to feel the fullest confidence in the future fidelity of our brethren. To them I most solemnly say, that the vows of God are upon them. In common with my brethren in the ministry, and with this large congregation, I have listened with delight to the account which they have given of the manner in which they have taken upon them the solemn work of the ministry. They are no longer their own. They are engaged persons. I hope they will never, in an hour of temptation, betray the trust which is confided to them. We may trust them among the sheep. We may trust them with the exercise of that important discipline which has already preserved our body, and which will preserve it until our present light shall mingle with the splendours of meridian day. O that they may continue steadfast! God grant that they may never depart from their honoured relation to Christ! May they adhere to him—“preach him to all, and cry in death, Behold, Behold the Lamb.” I view them as a pledge and promise that the great Head of the Church will perpetuate the ministry among us. Christ has set apart a peculiar order of men for the Christian ministry; and I consider the young preachers before us, and others of similar character and vocation, as able, pious, faithful men, who will occupy our places when we are no more. I cannot but advert to the vacancies which death has made in our ranks. “Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?” He who walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, holds the stars of the church in his own right hand. They shine while he pleases, and, when he pleases they are removed, and placed in an orb near his throne, there to shine for ever and ever. Many of our fathers are removed who were our glory and joy. They are removed at whose feet we have sat. We have held communion with their spirits. We feel it at this moment, and we mourn for their loss; but we bow in submission, and say, “The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” I only pray that these our brethren may be as our fathers were, and even much more useful—that the sacred deposit may be securely handed down to future generations. I feel this subject most sensibly; but I will forbear. Often have I thought of one venerable minister whom I have seen in his place among our fathers, but who has for many years been passed away. He cared for me; nursed the tender plant; and to him, under God, I owe the blessings which I possess. I entered alone into his dying chamber—when he exclaimed, “O my dear boy, preach Christ, preach him in life, preach him in a dying hour.” He collected all his energies to utter these words; and in a few moments passed away into the eternal world. I would say to all, “Preach Christ!” I entreat the prayers of this congregation on behalf of these young men. I pray that the anointing of the Holy Ghost may fall upon them; that they may shine in the church with increasing effulgence, and may “turn many to righteousness,” till they pass into that world where they shall “shine as the stars for ever and ever.”

The PRESIDENT, addressing himself to the Conference, then called upon those who were in favour of the resolution to signify their approbation by rising from their seats. The resolution was carried unanimously; and the President, while the Conference continued standing, turned to the candidates, and read the following form:—

“My dear brethren, the Conference authorises me to say, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that you are now received into full connexion with this body. And may the Head of the Church set his seal to the compact!”

After singing the hymn on the 414 page of the Wesleyan Hymn Book, commencing—

“Thou, Jesus, thou their breasts inspire,
“And touch their lips with hallow’d fire,”

the Rev. Jos. TAYLOR, Ex-President, delivered a very impressive charge, in which he enforced on the candidates the necessity of an entire consecration of all their powers to the great work to which they had solemnly pledged themselves. As it is expected that the Ex-President may be prevailed upon to publish this charge, we refrain from further comment upon it. After the charge, part of the 704 hymn was sung, and the Rev. Jos. BEAUMONT concluded the service with prayer.

On no former similar occasion was there a greater interest excited. Many persons were unable to obtain admittance into the chapel, and had to return to their homes in disappointment. A gracious influence prevailed every successive evening, and deep sympathy for the candidates was manifested by the congregation. They will repair to their various providential spheres of hallowed labour, followed by the prayers and best wishes of hundreds who listened to the renewal of their solemn vows.

CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS.

Wesleyan Conference, Sheffield, August 7th, 1835.

The Conference now assembled being well aware of the friendly anxiety which prevails among the members of the Methodist societies respecting the present circumstances of the connexion, deem it due to those whom they regard with the most unfeigned pastoral affection, to publish without delay, for their information and satisfaction, the following Documents.

The *first* is the *Answer UNANIMOUSLY* adopted by the Conference, after solemn and careful deliberation, to an *Address* received from certain parties connected with the “Grand Central Association.”

The *second* is a *DECLARATION*, voluntarily prepared, signed, and transmitted to the Conference, by a large number of the most respectable laymen of our Connexion, who, at the request of the late President, met in Sheffield on Friday, July 24th, in order to afford him the information which he had solicited as to the general views and feelings of the large and sound majority of our people, on the subject of the late agitations, and of the measures most fit to be adopted at the present period.

These Documents are submitted to the consideration of our friends, with the addition only of one observation. The Conference have the unspeakable satisfaction of assuring their beloved societies—and they state the fact with the deepest feelings of gratitude to God—that during their present assembly an *unexampled and most delightful unity*, both of judgment and affection, has prevailed among the preachers on every subject that has yet come before them. This, and other circumstances, the Conference consider to be “tokens for good.” They devoutly “thank God, and take courage.”—*The best of all is, GOD IS WITH US.* “The things which happened” shall fall out “rather unto the furtherance of the gospel.”

Reserving other communications for the Annual Pastoral Address to the Societies, which will be prepared as usual at the close of their Sittings, the Conference now earnestly commend themselves to the continued prayers of their people, to whom may all “mercy, and peace, and love be multiplied.”

Signed, on behalf and by order of the Conference,

RICHARD REECE, *President.*

ROBERT NEWTON, *Secretary.*

1. THE ANSWER OF THE CONFERENCE TO AN ADDRESS RECEIVED AUG. 1st, 1835. TO MR. GEORGE COOKMAN.

SIR,—The “Address to the Methodist Conference assembled in Sheffield,” dated August 1st, 1835, professing to proceed from “a numerous meeting of Wesleyan Delegates,” and signed, “George Cookman, Chairman, Ralf Grindrod, Secretary,” has been read to the Conference; who have directed me, as their President, to return the following answer:—

I.—It is with the greatest surprise that the Conference have listened to a statement in the Address, that the persons described are “Wesleyan Delegates,” and are commissioned by a vast number, comprising tens of thousands of Members of the Societies.” This surprise is founded on the *fact*, that no information has yet reached the Conference from any quarter, to justify the belief that any considerable number of our Societies have either wished for, or concurred in, the appointment of Delegates to any such Meeting. Indeed, not a single Circuit, or Society, nor even any one *collective body* of Trustees, in the whole kingdom, has announced to the Conference its mission of any individual or individuals for purposes so irregular and unconstitutional: so that the Delegation, or Commission, if it have really taken place to any thing like the extent asserted in the Address (which is a matter quite unproved), must, at all events, be allowed to have been accomplished by means the reverse of those which are fair, open, and manly, and to come before the Conference and the Connexion in a singularly unauthenticated and equivocal manner.

II.—But even if this weighty objection to the statement of the “Address” as to “Wesleyan Delegates” could be removed, there is another, which the Conference considers to be altogether insurmountable. It is founded on the broad and obvious principle of Methodism, and, indeed, of society in general, whether civil or religious, that such a plan of *confederated* delegations as that to which this Address appears to refer, designed to interrupt, or supersede, or intimidate the regular jurisdictions of our community, is calculated to subvert the purposes of agitation and faction, but can never consist with the maintenance of Christian order, edification, and peace.

III.—The Conference are constrained, on a calm review of various circumstances, to entertain the conviction, that the Meeting from which the Address has emanated, instead of being, as it is delusively termed, a Meeting of Wesleyan Delegates, is in reality an Adjourned Meeting of the body of persons calling themselves “The Grand Central Association,” of which a “Provisional Meeting” was held in Manchester in the month of April last. This conviction is strengthened by the notorious facts, that the Manchester Meeting in April formally resolved and agreed that an Adjourned Meeting of Delegates, connected with it, should be procured and assembled in Sheffield at this very period; and that, of the placards, and other advertisements, published on this occasion, some expressly speak of an “Adjourned Meeting” of the said Association, and others, though professing to call an “Adjourned Meeting of Wesleyan Delegates,” are as expressly stated to have been issued by “The Central Committee of the Association.” The last mentioned advertisements were signed by “William Smith” and “William Wood,” the Chairman and Secretary of the Association’s Committee; and the very Address now under consideration bears the signatures of the Chairman and Secretary of the Provisional Meeting of the Association, held in Manchester. It is, therefore, clear to the Conference, that this Address is in truth a communication, however disguised, from the “Grand Central Association” itself, or from persons who, by attending its meetings, and other unequivocal tokens of sympathy and encouragement are virtually identified with, and responsible for, the projects and proceedings of that Association.

IV. Taking this view of the origin and character of the present address, the Conference deems it due, in Christian simplicity and candour, to announce at once its deliberate and unalterable resolution, not to hold any intercourse with the said “Grand Central Association,” or with any other meeting, however denominated, into which persons who continue to be leading and active members of that confederacy shall be notoriously admitted, and receive approbation and sanction.

That Association was avowedly formed on principles which we deem to be subversive of the essential constitution of Wesleyan Methodism. It has, in the meeting at Manchester, and elsewhere, openly fraternized with various persons belonging to parties who have for a number of years ceased to have any connexion with our body, and are distinguished by the violence and injustice of their attacks on its members and its system. It has adopted a regular scheme and course of “agitation,” in disgraceful imitation of certain political proceedings; tending, by public meetings and other means of disturbance, to the ultimate division of our societies, and to the great annoyance and discomfort of those of our flocks who are desirous to live in peace and godly quietness. It has most wickedly, though happily with little effect, endeavoured to injure the public funds of the connexion, and thus, by persuading those who hearken to its counsels to “stop the supplies,” has placed itself in practical hostility to those great Institutions of piety and mercy, both at home and abroad, to the promotion of which the funds in question are devoted. It has, by various publications, attacked, in the most unmeasured and bitter language, that system which alone can with any truth or honesty be designated as *Wesleyan Methodism*, and advocated the substitution for it of other and widely different plans of ecclesiastical government and discipline—plans which are subversive of the Scriptural rights of the Christian Ministry, and inconsistent with the pure and

faithful discharge of the functions of the Pastoral Office;—plans which, therefore, are *not* Wesleyan Methodism, and which it can only serve the purposes of delusion and self-deception to miscall by that honoured name. It has, both in mixed meetings, and by means of the press, carried on and encouraged a regular course of slander and calumny, directed against the Conference and its members, in reckless violation of the requirements of truth, of piety, of brotherly kindness, and even of common decency itself; and is identified with a system of periodical vituperation and abuse, such as never before assailed a body of Christian Ministers and Pastors, on the part of persons still strangely professing for the most part, to desire religious communion with the very men whom they habitually revile and hold up to public reprobation and scorn.

With such an Association, or with any meeting of persons who are directly or indirectly in fellowship with it, or who shall persevere, after due admonition and expostulation, in aiding or abetting its unhallowed projects, the Conference could not hold communication, without violating their duty to God—their fidelity to the great trust and deposit of genuine Methodism, committed specially to their care—their pastoral obligations to the immense and overwhelming majority of their beloved societies, both at home and in foreign lands, by whom the divisive and disorderly principles of the Association are held in just abhorrence—and the proper regard which they owe to their own Ministerial honour and character, so foully aspersed by the leading actors in the present scheme of organised disturbance and agitation.

V.—While the Conference, in the fear of God, announce their firm resolution on this subject, and are persuaded that it will have the cordial approbation of the great mass of our societies—and especially of those whose standing, piety, intelligence, and active support of Methodism, best entitle their opinions on such topics to respectful consideration—they feel it also due to their beloved flocks in general, to those among the dissatisfied portions of their societies, whom they willingly consider rather as the deluded and misled than as the deluders and misleaders of the party, and to their own sincere and long-cherished sentiments of what is right and fitting, to make the following Declaration: viz.—That it is their intention to take into their most affectionate and careful consideration, partly at this Conference—as far as time can be found for such a task, when the *indispensable* business of their Session shall have been transacted—and partly at the earliest subsequent opportunity, some of the most material of those subjects of discipline which have of late excited the attention of the connexion. They will engage in this work, not with the purpose of making any one of those revolutionary changes which the Association has demanded, or of abandoning any one of those vital and important principles of pastoral administration which are embodied in Wesleyan Methodism, as now generally understood and exercised among us; but in order to carry out the principles already recognised into yet more extensive and satisfactory operation—especially in relation to the financial affairs of the connexion—and to provide, if possible, *additional guards and securities* for our people, in reference to the calm and temperate exercise of those scriptural powers which belong of right to the Pastoral Office, and are essential to the faithful discharge of its salutary and divinely appointed functions.

VI.—The Conference also is most happy to take this opportunity of declaring that while decidedly opposed to the recognition of any divisive and agitating Association or confederacy whatsoever, they are at all times ready to receive, with the most respectful attention, the friendly communications and suggestions of any member of their Societies (if unconnected with the “Grand Central Association,” or any such mischievous combination), on topics tending not to the subversion, but to the conservation of our Doctrines and Discipline, and of the great and vital interests of the Connexion. They are willing to appoint proper persons, Members of their Body, to converse freely and kindly with any such persons who may request it, in order to afford such friendly explanations and pastoral counsel as they may need in the present crisis. And if any parties, supposing themselves aggrieved or injured by certain acts of Local Discipline which have occurred during the past year, be disposed to forward their complaints to the Conference, in a peaceful and Christian spirit, and will promise to refrain, in the mean time, from all hostile proceedings, provision shall be made, as far as possible, to meet such cases by Special Deputations, from the Conference to the Circuits concerned, which Deputations, in conjunction with the District Committee, shall be charged to enter upon a fair and impartial revision of those transactions, and to do justice to all parties, on the basis of those long-tried and scriptural principles which the laws and usages of Methodism have ever recognised, and from which the Conference, by the blessing of God, ARE RESOLVED NEVER TO DEPART.—Signed, on behalf and by order of the Conference,

RICHARD REECE, *President*.

Carver-street Chapel, Sheffield, August 6, 1835.

II.—THE DECLARATION OF THE UNDERSIGNED LAY MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

Sheffield, July 24, 1835.

We, the undersigned Officers and Members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, having been convened by the President of the Conference for the purpose of conferring with him, in a free and friendly conversation, upon various subjects affecting the general interests of the Connexion at the present season, embrace the opportunity of expressing our sentiments on the following subjects:—

1. We deeply deplore the measures which have been adopted for the avowed purpose of agitating the various societies forming our Connexion—measures by which the work of God has been seriously interrupted, and the character of the body greatly injured; and we declare our conviction, that the aspersions which have been cast upon the Conference in general, and upon several of its most influential and distinguished members in particular, are false and calumnious.

2. We state it as our deliberate and conscientious opinion, that it is the imperative duty of the Connexion, faithfully and stedfastly to adhere to the great and long-established principles of original Methodism, and more particularly to those which prevent the introduction of Lay-Delegates into the Methodist Conference—which secure our Connexional union—which provide for the due exercise of the scriptural powers of the pastoral office—and which guarantee the purity and efficiency of the Christian Ministry, by confiding to the Conference the care of its own members.

3. We most cheerfully and entirely confide in the wisdom, integrity, and liberality of the Conference, in reference to such a modification or explanation of some of the rules of the Body as the Conference may consider best adapted to meet the present and future circumstances of the Connexion, and to carry out into more effectual and extensive operation those long-tried principles of Wesleyan Methodism, every departure from which we most sincerely deprecate.

Thomas Farmer, London
James Heald, Stockport
Thomas Beard Holy, Sheffield
James Fernley, Manchester
Thos. Walker, Stockton-on-Tees
Isaac Taylor, York
James Chadwick, ditto
Joshua Rea, Manchester
John Marsden, ditto
Peter Rothwell, Bolton
T. Brunting, Newcastle-on-Tyne
Thomas Marriot, London
Thomas Crook, Liverpool
D. Flintoft, Newcastle-on-Tyne
H. Hoole, Salford, Manchester
Robert Townend, Manchester
John Turner, Hull
Charles Nightingale, Rotherham
William Fawley, Sheffield
Francis Riggall, Louth
Matthew Wilton, Doncaster
John Shelton, Nottingham
John C. Burton, ditto
Samuel Naylor, Sheffield
Thomas Allen, Macclesfield
Samuel Hill Smith, Sheffield
John Lomas, Manchester

William Skinner, jun., Stockton
Joshua Swallow, Wakefield
John Nussey, Birstal
James Musgrave, Leeds
Henry Longden, Sheffield
Christopher Dove, Leeds
Thomas Vernon, Liverpool
John Bowes, Hull
John Lofthouse, ditto
G. R. Chappell, Manchester
John Harrison, ditto
Robert Henson, ditto
John Burton, Middleton
W. Gilyard Scarth, Leeds
James Wood, Manchester
T. Percival Bunting, Manchester
David Shaw, Huddersfield
Thomas Bagnall, West-Bromwich
John Daglish, Newcastle-on-Tyne
John Burton, Roundhay, Leeds
Ellis Eyre, Sheffield
Joshua Eyre, ditto
John Mathison, Liverpool
James Sargeant, Macclesfield
James Wood, Bristol
James Hoby, London

John Bell, Portington, Howden
James Wetherall, ditto
William Dyson, ditto
Joshua Thorley, Macclesfield
Thomas Davies, Salford
Thomas Branson, Sheffield
Martin Swindells, Macclesfield
James Wild, Sheffield
John Booth Sharpley, Louth
Roger Sharpley, ditto
Francis Marris, Roundhay, Leeds
Samuel Owen, Sheffield
J. Blackburn, Bradford, Yorkshire
William Robinson, Manchester
William F. Johnson, ditto
John North, Hull
Jonathan Beet, Sheffield
Thomas Beet, ditto
Joseph Agar, York
John Fernley, Manchester
John Jones, Sheffield
William Staley, ditto
William J. Beet, ditto
William Saxton, ditto
John Hall, ditto
Michael Ashton, Liverpool

We, the undersigned, not having been present at the Meeting mentioned in the foregoing Declaration, beg leave to express our cordial concurrence in all the sentiments which it contains.

John S. Kidson, Doncaster
Thomas Bowers, Chester
Richard Bealey, Bury
Thomas Kaye, Liverpool
George Heald, ditto

Thomas Sands, ditto
John J. Buttress, London
James Hunter, London
Thomas F. Rance, ditto

James Brown, ditto
Richard Marsden Reece, ditto
Joseph Symm, ditto
George Scales, sen., Newark

We have been informed that the wicked or deluded men who have left the Wesleyan Society at Dudley, have had the audacity to take violent and forcible possession of six or seven of the Wesleyan chapels in that town and neighbourhood; and have prevented, and resolved to prevent, the regular travelling preachers, and those local preachers who have been appointed by them, from preaching and performing all acts of worship therein. We hear that Messrs. Gordon, father and son, are the ringleaders in this disgraceful matter; and that the father is led on by his inexperienced and foolish son, who is but lately out of his teens; but who, being possessed of some little property and great effrontery, has been permitted to put himself at the head of the radical men of Dudley, and has commenced mob-orator with a vengeance. This person and his followers seem to be inspired with the same spirit, which, in 1794, animated the mobs in the same neighbourhood, who assaulted the great founder of Methodism. We know nothing of Mr. Gordon sen., but we think it an act of egregious folly for an old man to put himself in such a manner under the guidance of a youth, be the latter never so clever. We had another lamentable instance of the same weakness the last year. As to the illegality of these proceedings, there can be but one opinion amongst men well-informed, and capable of judging on the question. The refractory party cannot have acted under professional advice; or, if they have, their advisers have been utterly ignorant of the late decisions in the courts of equity. Those decisions clearly settled or recognised

the following points, viz.—That the Deed Poll is valid; that the Conference is the supreme legislative and judicial body in our connexion, from which there is no appeal; and that the Wesleyan chapels are held for the benefit and promotion of Methodism, under the controul and direction of the Wesleyan Conference. If these points are settled, what do these men mean by their proceedings? Are they weak enough to think that a few insignificant men in Dudley will be allowed to bully the Conference and the whole Wesleyan Connexion out of the chapels in that circuit? Do they think to beard the Conference and the Connexion with impunity? Poor deluded men! we pity them; but they will soon meet with a severe and merited punishment. We blame the preachers, who have been in that circuit, and the sound official men, for their timidity and indecision. It is clear that no trustee, nor any body of trustees, has any right to prevent a preacher appointed by the Conference, or the delegate or substitute of such a preacher, from the exercise of his religious functions in the chapel. On the first interruption, therefore, of the public worship, the superintendent preacher, and the sound trustees (if any such, and if not, then the preacher alone), should instantly have summoned the offending parties before the magistrate, whether they were Messrs. Gordon—father and son—or trustees of the chapel, or not; no party was privileged. In such a case of outrage, it is not necessary to give the party *eo instanti*, in charge to a constable: if a constable is not at hand, let the party aggrieved apply the next day to a magistrate, who shall speedily bind the refractory party to keep the peace, &c.; and if one magistrate refuse, let immediate application be made to another; but no magistrate in his senses will refuse the first application. We advise the newly appointed preachers to act thus promptly; and if any chapel is *closed* against him, let any one of the sound trustees, or his deputy in his presence, break open the chapel doors, and by this means get possession; and having possession, if any person attempt to prevent or molest the preacher in the quiet and peaceable discharge of his religious duties, let him resort to the magistrate at once. *The travelling preachers appointed to the circuit are virtually the owners of the chapels*, and have the undoubted right to officiate in them whenever they please. If there is no sound trustee, the travelling preacher himself, or his deputy in his presence, will be justified in breaking open the door. If an appeal to the local authorities is ineffectual (which we cannot believe), then let a bill be filed without delay against the trustees of *one* chapel, and an injunction prayed. This will soon be granted, and will insure the quiet enjoyment of the chapel until the suit is terminated. If the trustees of the other chapels are still refractory, let a bill be filed against each set of the refractory trustees for a similar purpose; and when they see the preachers and sound trustees acting in this prompt manner, and themselves invariably saddled with costs, they must be little less than madmen to proceed any further with the suit; but should they proceed, the event of the suit, though it may be a little protracted, will enforce their future peaceable submission, and impose upon them a vast addition of expense.—We understand that a sale has been made of one of these chapels, to the son-in-law of Mr. Gordon, sen. We have no doubt this sale will be set aside by the court of equity, on the intended application, as fraudulent and void, and the costs will fall on the trustees assuming the right to sell.—*Watchman*.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We had hoped that a continuation of the Illuminator would have been unnecessary after Conference, but such is the continued hostility of the "Grand Central Association"—being determined to agitate the connexion to the utmost of their power—we are still called upon to "expose its spirit and objects; to exhibit the true principles of the Wesleyan Constitution; to vindicate its authorities; and guard the members against the attempts made to seduce them from the society." We shall endeavour to meet the wishes so frequently expressed by our numerous distant readers for an earlier supply of the Illuminator, by so arranging our days of publication, that they may better suit their convenience in future. The three first numbers are reprinting, and will be forwarded with our next; so that perfect sets can be made up and procured through any respectable bookseller.—The quantity of matter contained in each number, and expense of carriage, induce us to raise the price to TWO-PENCE.

Our correspondents have our best thanks; their valuable communications shall have early attention.—We earnestly solicit a continuance of their favours.

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THE ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

No. 17. LIVERPOOL, SEPT. 23, 1835. **Price 2d.**

AGITATION.

OUR readers, and the Methodist public in general, will have been informed before this, that the wreck of the "Grand Central" agreed previously to leaving Sheffield that they would, unitedly and by the employment of hired agents, continue in their vocation of agitation for another twelve months. We believe that most of the rotten branches are already shaken from the Methodistic tree, and that they will find their occupation a thriftless one. But the want of success will deduct nothing from the malevolence of the design, and the anti-Christian character of the intended crusade against the peace and prosperity of the Societies.

Allowance may be made for the follies and eccentricities of men in a state of excitement, but when they can unitedly sit down and measure the amount of mischief they propose to accomplish by the revolutions of time, and publish their purpose to carry fire-brands, arrows, and death, into every part of the Connexion to which they can gain access, for *one year* more, then the evil assumes another and a more serious shape. If their occupation be good and Christian, why limit it to one year only? If wicked and sinful, on what pretended right do they claim for themselves the privilege of omitting the peaceful and pious duties of the Christian life, and giving themselves to "*work wickedness*" for that length of time? Our notion of religion and duty is, that they are uniform in their own nature and obligations; and if it be Christian for these parties to take their present course for one year, it is equally so for them to do it as long as they live, and spend the short span of their precarious existence in the midst of strife, debate, agitation, and confusion. This limitation of their enterprise appears to be a recognition of the usual plea of transgressors—that when certain projects are accomplished, they will carry their crimes no further, but give themselves to the duty of repentance and piety. There must have been some misgivings, or we know not what right the incendiaries could have to say they would continue the blaze of strife for *one year* only. But these gentlemen appear to claim the privilege of being altogether the masters of their own

conduct, and to frame a morality to suit their own taste. Their present duties and obligations they determine in solemn conclave, and that, we presume, by a show of hands; are to last till next August. We take the liberty to ask—what then? Will religion alter its nature—the Bible speak a new language—or the *faces* of Christian morality change sides by that time? This limitation of agitation to a year is an admission of the evil of the thing, which we gladly take. They will tell us, it is hoped, that, in the prescribed period, a sufficient impression will be made on the Body, to lead to an admission of their claims. They have no such expectation—they have no such hope. The end they propose is to loosen the attachment of as many from the Connexion, and make as great a sweep from it as possible; and they sagaciously conclude that this end can be best secured by agitation, which is no other than raising suspicion and discontent by the spread of falsehood, the poisoned barb of slander, and an appeal to the passions of the people.

But supposing it desirable that the members of the Wesleyan Societies should quit their present union with the Body, will the end justify the means employed? It is right to look at both sides of this question—to the one, for the sake of our Societies themselves, to the other, for the sake of the agitators.

We beg to remind the members of Society that the end proposed by the continuance of the agitation is to seduce them from their fellowship. It might be proper and right under some circumstances for persons united to the Body to quit it, and seek another fold; but the question is, whether this is the case under the guidance of the present anarchists.

1.—The existence of an unevangelical ministry would be a sufficient reason for the members of Society quitting the fold, and seeking for themselves “pastors after God’s own heart.” If the present discontent arose out of this cause, and the people had to complain that their ministers were unconverted men—had assumed the office without a divine call—preached some heterodox and unscriptural doctrines—held back the great and fundamental verities of our holy religion—could present no proof of the validity of their vocation by the conversion of sinners, and were obviously thrusting themselves on the public for some sinister and dishonourable purposes, then it would be just and right for the people to leave such a ministry. These evils, however, have never been alleged against men who have suffered every other kind of reproach. Had they existed, their eagle-eyed enemies would not have failed to detect them; and as they would have formed the most formidable battery by which to assail them, the whole nation would have been stunned with peal after peal, denouncing the heresies of the Wesleyan ministry. Instead of this being the case, we have heard many of the disaffected affirm, again and again, that in their own judgment, the truths of the gospel were never more clearly, fully, and forcibly preached in the Connexion than at the present period. Then, on their own avowal, the Members of Society can have no just ground of secession on account of a corrupt doctrine.

Much is involved in this fact which ought to have weight with every considerate and conscientious mind. It admits that the Methodist ministry is called and commissioned of God. It is impossible that any body of Christian preachers should possess the spiritual gifts—the knowledge of evangelical truth—the power and ability of public speaking—the zeal, self-denial, and love necessary to qualify them for the effectual and useful discharge of the duties of the ministry, unless they were anointed of God for their office. And above all, as the conversion of men is, in all respects, a divine work, and it is found on examination that this ministry is made the means of producing this great change—leading wicked men to repentance, faith, holiness, and the attainment of all the blessed privileges of the gospel—that is of itself an ample demonstration of the validity of their call, and the blessing of God on their exertions. Besides, this success is evidence not merely of the correctness of their doctrinal views, but also of the piety and purity of their character; except it can be shown that the Lord employs wicked men to accomplish his work of saving souls. No doubt there exists an intermixture of evil with the good, and we are far from assuming that the Wesleyan ministry is perfect. The knowledge of the best furnished may be augmented by the exhaustless stores of scriptural truth; the faith and zeal of the most devoted may be increased by meditations on the scheme of redeeming love, and fervent prayer; the tender charity and weeping sympathy of the most affectionate towards the lost souls of men may, no doubt, be quickened by a consideration of their dangers; the most gifted in the exercise of pulpit talent may improve in the arts of winning souls to Christ; the most assiduous in visiting the flock from house to house may be more diligent in this duty; and those who have imbibed most of the mind of Christ, and drank deepest into the fount of piety and holiness may grow in an elevated purity of heart and character. But bating the incidental evils which attach to men of “like passions” with others, we believe, with the men who commenced these agitations, that the Wesleyan ministry is, in the amount of its sterling sense, masculine mind, genuine piety, fervent zeal, unremitting labour, spiritual and ministerial gifts, and extent of success, equal to any other, and immeasurably superior to some.

But why do we set up a vindication of these much maligned and injured men, amongst our own people? Are not they themselves the best proof of the effective nature of their ministrations? There are, no doubt, many individuals in the Society who have received their impressions and first good by other instrumentality, and have sought admission into the Methodist Connexion for the sake of enjoying their peculiar means of grace. But allowing for these exceptions, is there a Society in the empire which has not been gathered in from the wilderness by the instrumentality of the men whom the agitators seek by every means to blacken and injure, for the purpose of alienating the people from their communion? The first point for the sober consideration of our people, when attempts are made to lead them astray, is, whether the ministry is a true and evangelical ministry?

If, on a serious examination of the question any of them think it unauthenticated by any Divine appointment; that no blessing is upon it; that the truth of the gospel is not clearly, fully, and honestly preached; and that by remaining to give it their countenance they are supporting an anti-christian usurpation and endangering their piety;—or, if they have altered their opinions, and consider another creed more faithful to the scriptural standard than that of Mr. Wesley; then, in any of these cases, it would be lawful to abandon the places of worship they have been accustomed to attend, and seek such preaching as they conscientiously believe to be pure and evangelical. But for large numbers of the Members of Society to allow themselves to be seduced from a ministry which has been the means of their salvation, and led to the attainment of all the privileges of religion they ever enjoyed; which, up to the time of these disturbances, they not only did not suspect, but actually loved and esteemed;—we say, after all this, to allow themselves to be allured astray, because some scurrilous agitator chooses to slander and abuse these men, is to manifest inconceivable weakness, and be convinced of evils against their own senses and experience. It is deeply humiliating to behold shoals of professed Christians, without thought, leave the deep waters in which they had enjoyed all the privileges and comforts of religion, driven on by some shark to be stranded and devoured in the shallows of strife and agitation. Let them silence the passions which slander has excited, and calmly ask themselves to what region they are allowing themselves to be led by the ringleaders of this revolt. They have a right to ask these men when they are plying their arts to excite their jealousies and mislead them, what it is they intend to give in exchange for their old temples and altars. Destruction appears at present to be their ultimate object. They are attempting to break down the barriers and raze the foundations of the Old Connexion; to annihilate its discipline, and trample its order in the dust; to unsettle the Societies, and break up the communion; to traduce, vilify, cripple, and render the ministerial office a nuisance in the sight of the people;—but they carefully guard against committing themselves to any system of their own. They are, to a certain extent, successfully leading the flock from those pastures in which they have been fed with “*knowledge and understanding*,” but take care to hide from them the place to which they propose to conduct them. When they formed the nucleus of new Societies, built their “*Tabernacles*,” divided the Schools, and established independent services, they hypocritically told the people that all this was done to keep them united to the Body, and prevent a division. And now, *for a year*, the hollow pretence is *reform*; the agitation is employed to reform Methodism! We ask, in the name of our injured and deceived people, what it is that the Association intend to do with them? Do they purpose to conduct them to the Kilhamite Connexion, or to the Primitive Methodists, or to the Protestant or Sigstonite party, or to the Brionites; or, do William Smith, Esq., of Reddish-house, and Wm. Wood, Esq. (!) of Newton-street, Manchester, and Richard Farrar, Esq. (!) of—we do not know what house and street—Liverpool, and the Rev. John Gordon (!) of the wine vaults and gin shop, Dudley, aided and abetted by the three Rev. Gospel ministers? No;—the avowed, *hired*, agitators, intend to manufacture a new system from the web of their own brain. We long to behold it, and our advice to our Societies is, that, at least, they pause and wait till it is presented to their inspection, before they quit the Connexion. We augur that as soon as the new constitution is put into a tangible shape and begins to work, these secessions from our Societies will cease; but as long as it is held back, and nothing but an ideal good—stretching like boundless space into regions beyond the sight and knowledge of the inhabitants of this little earth—there is something vastly dazzling to poetic sensibility and heated enthusiasm. Into this *incognita terra*, the agitators are conducting the warm, sanguine, restless spirits of the Connexion, who live more on dreams and anticipations of some *glory* to come, than on the truth, grace, and provisions of the gospel as at present set before them; but when they find it necessary to build a house for their own accommodation, in that land unknown, they may perhaps find that it is not more weather-tight, snug, and comfortable, than the old one they have left.

2.—Unscriptural conditions and rules of communion would be a sufficient cause of separation from the Wesleyan Connexion. If any of the Members of Society judge, on a careful examination of the case, that the terms of fellowship are such as cannot be supported by the authority of the word of God, then they are perfectly authorised in following their convictions, and seeking another. We greatly respect all such scruples; and as it argues an honest desire to be right, we should applaud such conduct. It is

possible for numbers of persons to believe that an established church on the episcopal model is not only lawful, but, on the whole, more scriptural and edifying than our present order. Others may consider that Independency in some of its modifications is right, and they can be more at ease and more holy in connexion with it. If they so judge, it is quite consistent to unite themselves to the church they in their consciences believe to be the nearest to the scriptures—or rather, to admit them fully. But if, on the other hand, it is admitted that the Wesleyan economy is scriptural, then those who hold that opinion can have no just cause of separation. We have heard many of the persons now alienated from us, utter louder and more fervent praises of Methodism than we ever indulged in. Their writings, speeches, and professions, all attest their opinion that it is not only true and scriptural, but that it is, or was, so in the highest and most eminent degree. What was affirmed in the beginning of our disputes simply amounted to a charge that the preachers and the Conference had abused their power, and been guilty of some mal-administration. They had held a Special District Meeting at Leeds, and it was pleaded that Special District Meetings were illegal. A Theological Institution was established for the instruction of young preachers, and it was held that this was a breach of the rule which enacts that “no new law binding on the Societies at large” shall be made final till the September Quarterly Meetings had the opportunity, if they chose, of expressing an opinion on the subject.—Dr. Warren was summoned before a District Committee of his brethren, and it was asserted that this was a breach of law—a tyrannical assumption of power on the part of that meeting. These were the original matters of dispute, and not the essential principles of the Connexion. The scriptural nature of the ministry, the rules of Society, the disciplinary code, the principles of communion, and the conditions on which membership is held, were not so much as mooted. And yet, on the ground of the first class of cases, many of the people left the Societies, leaving the subject of the second class unquestioned and untouched. Then, allowing this to be the case—viz. that Wesleyan Methodism is scriptural, in the judgment and opinion of the seceders—how can they justify themselves in their separation from that which they acknowledge to be true and divine?

If the agitators, as they move from place to place for the purpose of decoying the people from the Society, would give themselves the task of proving that Wesleyan Methodism is anti-christian and unscriptural; and, on that ground, it became their duty to come out of this Babylon, lest they should share in her plagues, then there would be some show of sense and reason in their proceedings. But no. With great dexterity they keep aloof from this tangible point, in which case it would be possible to lay hold of and grapple with their arguments, and declaim on general topics of tyranny, abuse, and corruption, on the part of the preachers. We ourselves do not pretend to any great power in this way—in fact we never became amateurs in the school of faction—but, taking human nature as it is, with its vast susceptibility on these subjects, we should not despair of some degree of success. But can any thing be more base, than for professedly religious men to take advantage of this great infirmity of our nature, for the express purpose of its gratification, and of making it the means of their selfish, ambitious, and anarchical designs. Yes; the agitators have succeeded already; they will meet with additional success, no doubt; and, in their prosperous career, they have called up, in bosoms reposing peacefully under the influence of religious feelings, a fire which will never, no never, be quenched. The divisions of the Societies, simply considered as such, is of trifling consequence. But Christianity itself is scandalized; and vast numbers of the poor deluded people who have had their distrust excited and directed to their preachers, will transfer the feeling from them to the gospel itself. The change is very easy, and being led to look upon the teachers as deceivers, they will readily admit, in some new season of temptation, that the doctrine taught is a deception. It is well enough known that the generality of men do not examine religion on its own evidence, or abstract beauty and perfection; but on that of the character of its professors, and especially of its ministers; and it is only necessary to fix a stigma upon them to make their cause detested and abhorred. The champions of confusion know this well, and apply themselves to their avocation with great adroitness and skill. They are too artful to confine their attempts to a discussion of the question, whether Methodism is scriptural or the contrary, and appeal to the judgment and principle of the people. In their work of revolution they have obviously received their lessons from the school of infidelity. The first infidels of this country made their assaults on religion by learned disquisitions on its evidences; but our modern sceptics know human nature better than their predecessors—they make their appeal in ribald and unmeasured blasphemy to the unbelief of the human heart. In like manner, our ecclesiastical reformers, instead of soberly and dispassionately debating the question

in dispute, carry the war into the regions of sense, passion, and prejudice. Here they know they can reign lords paramount if they can only provide a repast sufficiently seasoned to the taste. With shuddering sensitiveness our people at first shrunk from the touch of the insidious poison, which, by a delicate and dexterous hand, was distilled for their use; but now they exist in numbers sufficient to find a market for a regular, periodical supply, the most gross and rancid which was ever prepared by the alambic of wholesale quakery, or could be gorged and digested by pious and spiritual men.

We entreat the Members of our Societies to put the question at issue on its right footing for themselves, and guard against being led away by the arts and declamations of designing men. Is Methodism in its leading principles, its conditions of communion, and its ordinances and means of grace, scriptural and divine? This is the question to be determined by every honest and faithful man. Away with the cant about the "*mint, and anise, and cummin,*" what can be said on the "*weightier matters of the law!*" Let every person who may be assailed by the roar of the thunder of agitation ask what Methodism has been to him? Whether it has been the hateful system of oppression which it is represented to be. If so, let him repudiate it at once;—if not, let him resist the temptation and manfully defend it. For ourselves, we have no hesitation in stating our conviction, that in its doctrinal system, its disciplinary code, its ministry of the word of life, its worship and ordinances, its communion of saints, its rules of society, and the spiritual ends it proposes, it embraces all the fundamental principles of a true church of Jesus Christ. If others judge the contrary, they are right in leaving it, supposing they have come to that conclusion by the means of study, prayer, and a humble subordination of their opinions to the word of God; but to quit a religious society which has been the means of their salvation, merely because there is some excitement, or because some disappointed demagogue chooses to employ his vituperative powers in defaming a cause which has refused to bow to his claims, is an act, not merely of thoughtless indiscretion, but of positive sin. We should like to ascertain how many, out of the thousands who have left our Connexion in the midst of this commotion, have done so by arriving at a conviction that the Society rested on an unscriptural basis, by the light of divine truth carefully sought in the closet, in answer to fervent and believing prayer. Had this been the course adopted no objection could be taken; but, instead of it, the settlement of the question has been sought in the midst of public clamour, riotous meetings, inflammatory harangues, and the storm and whirlwind of prejudice and passion. We ask the common sense of mankind whether these are the means to be employed to settle grave and difficult questions of church polity. These topics have occupied the attention and engaged the talents and learning of the wisest and most holy men on earth without uniformity of opinion; and yet, in our day, they are to be decided at a public meeting, amid the uproar, the vociferations, and shouts of a multitude, the vast majority of whom never read a line on the subject, beyond the sapient productions of the *Watchman's Lantern*. We do intreat the remaining Members of our Societies, for the sake of their own respectability as reasonable beings, to make out some case and show of reason for any movement they may resolve on towards the Association; and not like a flock of silly sheep, push their heads through the gap made in our inclosures, by the mischievous daring of those who went before. They ought to have some better cause for leaving their pastures, and wandering into the wilderness—they know not where—than the instinctive one, others went before them. And yet, if you inquire of those who have left the Society and gone to the Association, why they did so, nine out of ten will say at once, *they went because their leader went*. Not because they discovered that Methodism was unscriptural, had failed to administer spiritual comfort to them, or was, in any way, injurious or oppressive, but they were attached to their leader; he went, and all they know about it is—they followed! Astonishment and shame fill our hearts. And is this the amount of intelligence and principle attained? We hope all who are capable of such folly are gone already, and that the remainder of the Members of Society are not simple machines, to be moved by the touch of any factious spirit, who may choose, at his will and pleasure, to lead them blind-fold to any thing he pleases. St. Paul tells us—"every one shall give account of himself to God;" but, in this instance, it should seem that the principle of substitution is adopted, and the leader is made the scape-goat; if not to bear the load of their sins, at least to take the burden of thought and judgment on himself. Our great desire is, that our present people will take the trouble of thinking for themselves, recollecting, that the Bible is the only standard of judgment and faith in religion; and as we believe, in our consciences, that Methodism rests on the truth of the word of God, so we equally believe that it will flourish and spread when the present anti-christian attempts to overthrow it are forgotten, unless remembered as the madness of a day.

3.—Tyrannical exactions and restraints contrary to Christian liberty would be a justifiable cause for abandoning the Societies. Our brethren are made to believe by the clamours of the demagogues, that this is really the case; that all Christian liberty is denied them, and that it is high time that the people, with a true British spirit, should claim their rights. The terms reform, rights, and liberties, are employed in this agitation, just in the sense that they are bandied about the country by political partizans; meaning—if they mean any thing more than a talisman to make an impression—that the people have been denied some Christian rights and privileges belonging to them. If this proposition could be established, they would be perfectly authorized in resisting the usurpation, and quitting the church in which it was claimed.

It is of consequence that this question be put on its true footing. We remind our readers that the disputes in our Connexion do not respect *liberty*, but *power*. They had no reference in their commencement to the just rights of the people, as Members of a Christian church, but to *power*; claimed on the part of some of its officers, and denied by others. It is true, the disaffected officers carried the dispute amongst the people, attempted to make them parties, and, by their numbers and influence, to coerce the opposite party into a surrender. But the true question in debate is this: shall the power of government remain as it is—a mixed and balanced government between the preachers, and the leaders, and other officers, or shall it become a despotism—that is, a government exercised by one class of officers only? A democracy is as much a despotism as an absolute monarchy; because, it is power possessed by one class only. Power, to be safe, must be distributed; and not simply amongst persons of one class, who, because of identity, may be supposed to entertain similar views, and act together; but amongst different orders of persons, that they may be a check and guard upon each other. This is the theory of the British Constitution, and it is both the theory and practice of the Wesleyan economy. Let the spirit and rules of the Connexion be carefully examined, and it will be found that the officers of the Body exist in classes possessed of separate claims, and yet mutually dependent on each other. Methodism, in its circuits, is, in point of fact, the system in practical operation. Here we find Travelling Preachers, with their prescribed functions; Local Preachers, with their rights distinctly acknowledged; Leaders, with their separate meetings and privileges; Trustees, with their powers legally secured. True liberty consists in each of these classes rightly possessing and using its powers, not independently of the others, but in harmony and union with them. If the preachers exercised their ministry and administered discipline on their own individual responsibility, then such a state of things would be pastoral despotism; and if the leaders, or any other functionaries, possessed the power to act independently of the others, then, though the evil might have a more popular form, and assume the features of an oligarchy, yet still it would be a despotism.

Now, what is the question in dispute? As far as it has taken a tangible shape, its most moderate form is that of rendering the leaders' meetings independent. The two primary and leading claims set up, are, that its own members shall not be expelled in any way, or by any means, except by the vote of their own majority; and, all their acts of discipline shall be final, except by an appeal to a quarterly meeting, which is very much like an appeal to themselves. Now, the theoretic fallacy of the first claim—that of being subject to no control, being responsible to no power, and liable to no expulsion but by their own act—arises from confounding things which essentially differ. We believe these gentlemen have the notion of representation in their minds, and often call themselves the representatives of the people. They are no such thing, in the proper sense of the term, although one of the Association addresses had the hardihood to affirm, in its appeal to the Societies, that they were elected to their office by their suffrages. Election to Parliament by the votes of the people effectually prevents men perpetuating their own power. There are periodical seasons appointed by the British constitution for the re-election of members; when they are called upon to give an account of their stewardship, and the people have the opportunity of sending other persons, if they see good. What is there answering to this in the appointment of Methodist leaders? The claim set up by these *liberals* is, in its spirit, as un-English and as much opposed to the true principle of liberty as it is possible to imagine. Let a leaders' meeting, as to its own integrity and right to retain its members, by its own majority, without any foreign interference whatever, be once conceded, and it becomes a perfectly irresponsible body. It is not responsible to the people, for it is not elected by them, and they can have no opportunity of either calling them to an account, or, in case of mal-practices, removing them from their office. On the principle claimed, every leaders' meeting would become like the Rump Parliament, who voted their own irresponsible perpetuity, excluded all external influence, and then

exercised a tyranny over the nation, never exceeded, and rarely equalled, by the most despotic of the English monarchs.

The second claim is equally unconstitutional. If a leaders' meeting, or a separate circuit, in our present connexional state, could establish the right of exercising an independent jurisdiction in matters of discipline, there must be an end of our federal union. Each Society, or, at least, each circuit, would exist as an independent religious republic, and of course, might, in that state, act as it pleased, even to the annihilation of our doctrinal standard, and the introduction of principles and practices plainly alien from Wesleyan Methodism. Many other matters are made subjects of dispute; but we have selected these as the most moderate, but not the least mischievous. The clamour respecting these points is considered a struggle for liberty. Who does not see that it is altogether a contention, not for an enlarged freedom for the people, but a monopoly of power on the part of the officers. We know Methodist preachers who would infinitely prefer the pure and proper independency of churches, to the absolute, irresponsible independence of local meetings and circuits. In the one case, we see the pastor standing before the whole body of his people, enjoying a frank, bland, and unrestrained intercourse with them all. They are the judges of his ministry, spirit, and habits, *directly*, without the control and intermeddling of some body of jealous officers, who, for the sake of exalting themselves, have an interest in degrading him; and we find that on this principle some of the finest specimens of pastoral fidelity, on the one hand, and of pure, confiding Christian attachment and respect, on the other, have grown up, to the great comfort and happiness of both parties. But, instead of this fine and unembarrassed communion betwixt the pastor and his flock, it is now proposed so to *OFFICER* the Methodist minister as to make him march right and left, turn out his toes, and hold up his chin, exactly like a poor soldier under the orders of his colonel. No men on earth have less official freedom, even now, than the Wesleyan preachers. We are perfectly willing to see them placed in circumstances in which they cannot do wrong, but we would not have them so circumstanced as to prevent their doing right. Let securities against all kinds of mal-practices be even increased and multiplied; but as every man is responsible, in his calling, let him have the freedom to keep a good conscience, and fully to discharge his duties. The various officers of the Connexion have all the liberty which the reciprocal rights belonging to other parties can admit; for it must be recollected, that in living in a religious community, as well as enjoying the benefits of civil institutions, we always sacrifice a part of our natural freedom. We forego the one for the sake of the other.

We now turn to the case of the private Members of the Society, and ask if they enjoy a state of perfect Christian liberty? Christian liberty, as distinguished from official power, is, the enjoyment of all the privileges of Christianity in themselves, and as administered amongst the people to whom we belong. Deprivation in this respect is tyranny. For instance, when the church of Rome withheld from the laity the cup in the Sacrament, they were illegally and tyrannically deprived of a Christian right. So the exaction of any unauthorised ceremony, or the laying of any unscriptural restraint on the people, is an infringement of their liberty. When the Judaizing teachers went amongst the Gentile converts to subject them to the Mosaic law, they attempted to place a yoke upon them "which neither they nor their fathers could bear," and which was itself unauthorised and tyrannical. We ask, have the members of the Wesleyan Societies either been deprived of any religious right, or has any new exaction been laid upon them? They know that neither of these forms of oppression has taken place, and they remain in possession of all the privileges of religion. A poor person in this town being lately appealed to on the subject of her freedom, and told very gravely that tyranny and oppression reigned, and that the rights and privileges of the people were gone—"Why, that is very odd," replied the poor woman, "I never perceived it; I have been a member of Society many years, and I find things just the same as at the beginning: I have a good seat provided for me in the house of God, and hear the gospel free of expense—I go to the Sacrament and to my class unmolested, and when I have a penny to give, I give it; and when I do not, nothing is said to me." This is the fact; and the poor woman in question only gave utterance to a great truth in homely terms. None of our people have been debarred of any right.—All religious privileges are included in the liberty to enjoy the provisions of the gospel, and to employ all the gifts and talents conferred by the Head of the church. The ordinances of religion do not confer experience, but are divinely appointed means, and these means are open to all our people. But in addition to this, no system on earth affords such numerous facilities for the occupation of any talent or gift of usefulness as the Wesleyan Connexion. Notwithstanding this, many of the private Members of the Society have been prevailed upon to believe that they were in

a state of bondage; and similar attempts, it seems, are to be made on those who remain. Whether they also will be brought to the persuasion, that the yoke of Methodism is too galling for their shoulders, remains to be proved. In the mean time, we, in all possible affection, entreat them to be careful not to allow themselves to throw off the *yoke of Christ*, in discarding the restraints of Methodism. There is some reason to apprehend that the present clamour respecting liberty arises out of licentiousness of principle. We are all bound to obey the word of God; and before any more of our people unite with the agitation, we would ask them, if, in their sober judgment, and in the prospect of eternity, they consider themselves at *liberty* to leave the PREACHERS who have ministered to them the word of life, and by whose instrumentality they have been saved; and then to unite in blackening, aspersing, defaming, and slandering their characters, either by epithets of their own, or joining an Association, who have made it their very occupation and trade to do so? We also beg to ask, if they feel at *liberty* to leave the WESLEYAN SOCIETIES, which have nourished and guarded their piety and ministered freely to them its best blessings, and join in a grand confederacy to do all in their power to upset and destroy them? Permit us also to ask, if they feel at *liberty* to forsake their *old associates* and companions in the faith and patience of Jesus Christ, and then, when they have left them in a state of peace, love, purity, and pious happiness, they feel it right to unsettle their minds, disturb their tranquillity, and allure them, they know not whither? One other question: do they feel at *liberty* to use all their influence to "*stop the supplies*" from those institutions which propose to send the gospel to a perishing world, and administer relief to poor and afflicted persons? We ask these questions because this is the *liberty* claimed and exercised by the party who are to be their companions. They call the indulgence of the basest and meanest passions of human nature, in its lowest state of profligate pollution—*Christian liberty*!! The claim set up to do mischief, rend the church, damage its interests, make it a scorn and a reproach to the world, scatter "the flock for whom Christ died," and obstruct the current of Christian charity and purity, instead of being *liberty*, is the subserviency of their minds to the interests and machinations of him who "goeth about seeking whom he may devour." If our brethren wish to enjoy the *liberty* wherewith Christ hath made them free," we implore and conjure them to flee from this region of "strife and every evil work."

4.—The demand of sinful compliances, or the absence of suitable helps to the attainment of holiness, would form substantial causes for quitting a religious society. The plea of the martyrs who left the Church of Rome, and the noble host of non-conformists who, refusing to comply with the act of uniformity, were expelled the Church of England, pleaded their conscience, and asserted that they were obliged to separate to avoid sin. When the scriptures were placed in the hands of the papists, those who embraced the truth, instantly felt that they could not hold the genuine doctrines of Christianity and conform to the superstitious practices of the Romish church. At the hazard of their lives, they left it, and great numbers sealed the sincerity of their *protest* by the glories of the martyr's crown. In like manner, when the act of uniformity was passed, near two thousands of the most zealous and holy ministers of that day felt that it would be sinful to comply, and they met the storm in a spirit of gentle, but decided piety. We can conceive it possible for persons to take exceptions to our doctrines, or discipline, and feel it imperative upon them to quit the Connexion; but we have never heard of this being the case with any of the dissentients. They do not complain of our doctrinal standard. Their consciences are not injured by a compliance. Indeed, as terms of Membership, the Connexion insists on no test; consequently, no one's mind can be hurt on that score. They have not, as far as we know, ever found fault with our manner of worship; or that kneeling at the Lord's table, or meeting in class, are sinful. Their consciences are not lacerated and wounded by any thing which they consider wicked impositions. Yet these being the constant and every day ordinances of the church, are the very things which must either sooth and edify, or distress and pain, because of their constant recurrence. Indeed, amongst all the slanders thrown on our bleeding Connexion, it has never been yet asserted, that she demands any sinful compliances, or that the structure of her economy and the administration of her ordinances were such as upright and holy Christians could not attend. It has been said that "*no honest man*" could remain with the wicked Conference; but this was spoken of the men, and not of the order of the church. We, therefore, take it for granted that no such feeling exists.

But we are aware that the constitution of a church should not merely be free from the taint of evil; but also be calculated to assist and aid the pious inquirer after truth and holiness. In this, again, no objection is raised. On the contrary, all those who have left us, as well as those who remain, must be ready to allow, that, in the writings

of our founder and others ; in the testimony and experience of our departed forefathers ; in the experimental ministry they hear ; in the meetings for prayer they may constantly attend ; in the fellowship of saints they enjoy in their classes and bands ; as well as the more extraordinary agencies and means employed for their edification, the helps to holiness in this Connexion exceed those to be found in any other quarter. The great end proposed by Mr. Wesley in all his arrangements—and they remain unaltered to this day—was to cherish and promote the spirit of experimental piety. Taking the scriptures as his guide, and well understanding the workings of the human heart—its exposure to care, sorrow, and temptation—he was manifestly anxious to provide such means as should tend to keep alive the spirit of devotion and love. It is consolatory to reflect, in the midst of the reproach and desertion to which Methodism is now exposed from her faithless children, that it has, by the blessing of God, trained up tens of thousands for heaven, many of whom were the parents and relatives of those who are now attempting its injury and ruin. If a single Associationist chance to cast his eye over this page, we would affectionately ask him, whether he finds the same food for his hungry soul in an agitation meeting, as, when after the toils of the day, he retired to his class, his band, his prayer meeting, or the more public means ; not in the midst of tumult and strife—but of peace, prayer, and mutual expressions of kindness and Christian love. O ! how different is the stormy region of agitation to the peaceful, tranquil, and often joyous place, where the “bishop and shepherd of souls meets with his flock”—to “lead them in green pastures and by the side of still waters !” As our remaining members value their own peace of mind, progress in the divine life, enjoyment of the fruits of holiness, and the rest and quiet of a “good conscience,” we implore them to avoid those evils. The wise and saintly Fletcher entered the arena of controversy, though on points of *doctrine*, and with a *distant* adversary, with fear and trembling, lest he should be betrayed into an improper spirit ; and if this was the case with a man so holy, with what extreme caution should persons of common attainments in knowledge and grace, enter into dispute with their *brethren*. We fear—indeed it is a matter too notorious to be doubted—that this unhallowed contest has already engendered feelings not likely to be allayed for a great length of time, if ever ; and it must be the wisdom of those who possess a safe anchorage and quiet mooring, to keep their station till the “storm be overpast.”

5.—The absence of God, and the consequent barrenness of the ordinances, may, under some circumstances, be a valid reason for quitting our connexion with a religious society. But in this case, it is of importance for us to know that the fault is not our own. The blessing of God is never withheld from the real gospel, when preached in its own spirit. Up to the time of our dissensions, God was amongst us ; if the conversion of sinners, the joys of salvation, and the attainment of the grace and exhibition of the beauties of Christian holiness, may be considered as evidence. Our humble hope is, that this is still the case. Of one thing we are deeply convinced, it is—that our stability and prosperity as a Body must depend on his presence and blessing ; and, if these are vouchsafed, although, for our unfaithfulness, He may permit these “*accusers of the brethren*” to go certain lengths for the purpose of trying, humbling, and drawing them out in fervent prayer, yet, when their work is done, He will lay a restraint on their power to do mischief, and raise his cause to a state of greater prosperity than ever. The true friends of the Connexion can have no ground to fear. The indications of the divine favour and presence, in the course of the past year, have been striking ; and, as in former seasons of trial, His providence has often interposed ; and, like the wheel in the vision of Ezekiel, the Connexion turning round in the storm and moving on at the same time. The opposition and difficulties of this period have already called forth energies which lay dormant ; united the preachers in a manner never witnessed before ; inspired new zeal ; kindled love towards our bleeding Zion, which has risen to a much higher intensity than it would have done, if not fanned by the winds of adversity ; led to an examination of principles, and the exercise of a much more comprehensive and well-grounded trust, and called forth fervent prayer from our beloved friends in every place. With these signs of the continued presence and blessing of God, we cannot despair for Methodism. We only tremble for those of our brethren, who have thoughtlessly left it, without asking the question before hand, whether GOD HAD LEFT IT, and whether it would be impossible for them to find Him in the places where they had been accustomed to enjoy his communion and taste his love. Most affectionately would we intreat all our Societies to hesitate before they quit their present fold, lest they should abandon the path trodden by the footsteps of the Saviour, for a dreary waste where his voice is not heard. In times of great excitement, sobriety of thought is of difficult attainment, and when men are once in motion under its stimulus, it is most difficult to stop ; yet, we

do hope, that one reflection will have the effect of suggesting this inquiry :—in leaving the Society where I first found my Saviour and obtained his grace—AM I DOING THE WILL OF GOD?

THE NEW CONNEXION AND ITS PROSELYTISM.

Since we wrote our last article on the polity of the New Connexion, we have received a copy of the *public minutes* of Conference for 1835. On looking over the first page, which contains the names of the persons who composed the Conference, we perceive that no supernumerary, except Mr. Allin, was *allowed* to be present! Though two supernumeraries reside in the town where the preachers and delegates assembled, yet they were both excluded from taking any part in their deliberations! Mr. Allin's admission to Conference seems to us to be based on *no principle*; for why should he have a seat, year after year, in this assembly, when the rest of the superannuated preachers, some of whom are his *seniors*, have been in the ministry many more years than himself, are rejected? So much for the *justice* of lay delegation!

While we have perused the minutes, the principal thing which has impressed us, is the *proselyting* character of the New Connexion. As the body originated in dissensions and divisions, so it seeks, by discord and secessions, to enlarge its borders. A few oligarchists have, during the past year, been compassing sea and land to make proselytes; a fact which the heavy charges they have made on the yearly collection abundantly confirms. They have expended in postages £15; in travelling £38 13s 10d; and in printing, £4 4s 6d! Nor are these particulars of expenditure the whole amount to be found on the minutes. Mr. Allin, who has written letters to Mr. M'Lean, has received for his proselyting services the recompense of £30! So the annual committee has cost the connexion the handsome sum of £88 16s 6d; which is about one-sixth of the yearly collection as returned by the various circuits! The expense of a similar committee in 1832 was only £1 12s!

We believe it is a grievance to the body that part of the £88 has been laid out in vain. No sooner was the decision of the Wesleyan Conference, on the case of Mr. Stephens known, than the pensioned Generalissimo of the New Connexion proselyting corps, and two other zealots visited Ashton-under-line. Their object, of course, was to persuade Mr. Stephens and his partizans to swell the ranks of their community. The parties met together, and the excellencies of the New connexion would, doubtless, be exhibited; particularly as affording liberty to hate the Church of England, to expose her abuses, to slander her priesthood, and to overthrow her foundations; but Mr. Stephens and his friends, owing to some cause or other, disappointed expectation; for they declined accepting the offers which were made them, and chose become Independents!

We must admit that similar expeditions have, in other quarters, been more successful. The Connexion is told in the address of Conference, "that new fields of labour have been entered upon in Cornwall, Gateshead, Norwich, Yarmouth, &c., all of which promise an abundant harvest." If any of our readers ask, has the body gained an entrance on these fresh and hopeful stations in a truly missionary style? We must reply in the negative. A career so honourable and evangelical is, we regret to say, foreign to the New Connexion zeal and policy. Had not the tocsin of war been sounded in Cornwall, &c., the New Methodists would, in these enumerated places, never have been known. The 300 members in Cornwall, the 100 in Norwich and Yarmouth, and the 800 in Gateshead, &c., are all proselytes!

The Conference knows these facts; nevertheless, they are made to wear the aspect of great charity. The preachers and Societies that have been received into the Body, were deeply injured by priestly tyranny; and, the "Conference felt it their bounden duty to help, under circumstances of suffering." Hence, congratulating themselves and their constituents on the performances of this duty of benevolence, they assert "our community has presented a peaceful asylum to the oppressed and persecuted."

One of the most distinguished of these sufferers who have awakened the sympathy and kindness of the New Connexion, is Mr. Forsyth. He was for some years a Wesleyan minister, who, in common with all Methodist preachers, was bound to preach the doctrines of John Wesley, as contained in the first four volumes of Sermons, and his Notes on the New Testament. But this restriction did not suit Mr. Forsyth's notions

of liberty. He claimed a right both to believe and *teach* that one of these doctrines—the Eternal Sonship of our Saviour—was unscriptural, and little, if any thing, it is said, short of blasphemy. Such un-methodistical preaching could not be tolerated in the Old Connexion; therefore, he left the body, and united himself to the New Methodists. Of this “oppressed and persecuted man” it is asserted in the New Connexion Minutes, he “cordially believes our doctrines.” If this declaration be true, Mr. Wesley’s writings are not honestly referred to as illustrating the creed of the Body; and it is high time the hymn book which is used in their sanctuaries underwent some revision. Let it be examined at pages 244, 225, &c., and it will be found that the Redeemer’s “natural sonship by an eternal, inconceivable generation,” is a doctrine which is solemnly recognised in the published forms of worship in the New Connexion!

How long the new community with its contradictory ministry will remain “an asylum of peace,” it is not in our power to determine. To show that the tranquillity of the body will be endangered by it, we beg the attention of our readers to the subjoined statement of facts. We know a minister who, in a certain chapel belonging to the New Connexion, delivered a sermon in which he was led by his text to speak on the Eternal Sonship as in accordance with holy scripture, and the belief of the primitive church; together with its importance in the Christian system. Immediately after the service, he was warmly assailed by two individuals who said, “we do not believe the Eternal Sonship, and you ought not to have preached it here; it was only the other Sabbath morning that Mr. — told the congregation that this doctrine is opposed to the Bible and full of absurdity; the people will not know what to believe.” The preacher replied—“he was not aware such a sermon had been delivered; but, however that might be, the eternal sonship was taught in the standard works of Methodist theology.” His reprovers then added—“the Conference must take up the matter, for it will never do for the preachers thus to contradict each other in the pulpit.” The Conference have had the subject brought before them; and the decision is, that New Methodist ministers are at liberty to say “*yea and nay*” in their ministrations!!

Another of these “oppressed and persecuted” men is Mr. James Jones. He was also a Wesleyan preacher for more than a quarter of a century; but, on the 26th of May, he resigned his situation in the body, and immediately afterwards joined the New Connexion. It appears from his public resignation that, for some years, he has been an unhappy man. The cause of his uneasiness is soon related. He says—“I have greatly desired to obtain the *most liberal interpretations* of our doctrines;” and it was probably with this view that he published a book to prove—if we rightly understood it—that God does *not* “know the end from the beginning;” that He is wiser to-day than He was yesterday, and He will be wiser to-morrow than he is to-day! This publication, which is an outrage upon both the scriptures and Methodism, most seriously tends to weaken the evidence of Christianity, by making prophecy into mere conjecture; for God cannot know the future actions of men!! Yet the author of such a heterodox volume is an “oppressed and persecuted” man; because, forsooth, the Wesleyan Conference condemned and suppressed it, and censured its writer!

The attachment of Mr. Jones to the polity of the New Connexion may be sincere, but it must be *new born*. A declaration of satisfaction with the Wesleyan form of church order, and of determination to maintain all its essential principles unimpaired, was printed and circulated in January, 1835; and among the many hundreds of preachers who signed it, is Mr. James Jones! It appears, however, that during the *four* subsequent months, his mind underwent a complete change, and he pronounces the declaration “coercive and inquisitorial.”

Though Mr. Jones has found a “peaceful asylum” in the new community, he has not been received like Mr. Forsyth to all the privileges of the body. The reason of the difference is to be attributed to the counting-house principles which have long had a presiding influence in the New Methodist Conference. If Mr. Jones, acting the part of a most unfaithful shepherd, had thrown his last Wesleyan circuit into confusion, and had succeeded in wresting from it 800 members, the seals of other preachers’ ministry, his reception among his new friends would have been more gratifying to himself, and more beneficial to his family. When we lately ventured to make a complaint in favour of Mr. Jones to a person who is in office in the New Connexion, the defence made was, “that he had not been so privileged as Mr. Forsyth, because it was considered that the latter had brought his bread and cheese with him!”

As “the horse-leech hath two daughters, crying, give, give,” so the New Community is craving more proselytes. The leading members of the Annual Committee are again resident in Sheffield, where the recent dishonourable attempts to disturb and scatter the Wesleyan Societies, have been so far from tending to the increase of the

New Connexion, that the latter Body has reported to Conference a *decrease* of about 100 members! Messrs. Allin and Co. have authority, should they deem it necessary, from the very important events which are transpiring around them, and which are so "*interesting to the Connexion*," to call a special meeting of the "Heads of Houses." And to smooth the way for Dr. Warren and Co. into the "peaceful asylum," the late Conference has resolved to proceed no further with the Theological Institution! The Conference of 1834 agreed to have one; the committee appointed to draw up the plan declared it "indispensable," but now it is given up! So much for the weathercock legislation of lay delegation!

There is one prominent fact in the proselyting labours of the New Connexion which Wesleyan Methodists will do well to mark—that *the theology of John Wesley is not safe in the care of lay delegation*: It is our decided conviction, that, in the New Community, his doctrines are *giving way*. The Conference may call it, "a peaceful asylum for the oppressed and persecuted;" but we must designate it, *a refuge for the heterodox*. And to all Wesleyan Methodists we would say—if you wish the doctrines of our venerable founder to be preserved in all their simplicity and unison, then do your utmost to maintain his system of church discipline in all its integrity. We fully believe that, if the Wesleyan polity be radicalized, then Wesleyan divinity will ultimately undergo a "reform backward."—EPSILON.

PROCEEDINGS AT WHITEHAVEN.

Notwithstanding the disgraceful opposition to Methodism and the Missionary cause of certain unprincipled agitators in Whitehaven, the anniversary of the Wesleyan Missionary Branch Society was held in that town on Monday, 13th instant. The preparatory sermons were preached on the preceding Sunday, by the Rev. Messrs. Squance and Lusher, from Manchester. The Rev. Joseph Taylor, President of the Conference, happily arrived from Carlisle in time to take the chair at the meeting, which was very numerously attended, the chapel being quite filled. From the well known violent character of the men who have there engaged in the work of revolutionizing or destroying Methodism, and their threats to prevent the holding of the Missionary meeting, it was judged expedient to obtain the protection of the police; and the meeting was permitted to proceed without interruption until the collection was made, which several individuals rudely endeavoured, as much as possible, to prevent.

The venerable chairman opened the meeting by a lucid and comprehensive statement of the extent and operations of the Parent Society throughout the world. The local report was then read, and the meeting was subsequently addressed by Messrs. Lusher and Squance, at considerable length; and notwithstanding the arts and violence used to prevent or injure the meeting, the collections amounted to *more* than last year. Messrs. Squance and Lusher met with similar encouragement from the friends of missions in other parts of the circuit, and especially at Workington. The services there, both on the Sunday and at the public meeting, were attended with a delightful influence, and the collections were *more than four times the amount of last year*.

On Sunday morning, the 14th, the President, attended by the circuit preachers and Messrs. Squance and Lusher, met the official members of the Society in Whitehaven, for the purpose of hearing any complaints which any of them had to make, and if possible, to bring them to a better mind. But notwithstanding the mild and apostolic manner in which he conducted himself towards all present in that meeting, some of them scarcely refrained from offering him insult; one of the leaders of the faction furiously denouncing the proceedings and laws of the Conference as "villainous."—Although every objection was fairly and fully met by the excellent President, the meeting broke up without any satisfactory result, except to the few who remain attached to genuine Methodism, and who were confirmed in that attachment by what they heard that morning.

As Dr. Warren had, a few days before, summoned the Society together in the Independent's chapel for the purpose of laying before them a statement of his case in the form of a lecture, on which occasion—although it was known by several persons present that he was indulging in misrepresentation and falsehood, concerning the Confe

rence and the special District Meeting—he had an uninterrupted hearing, confirming many in their opposition and unsettling the minds of others; the superintendent, Mr. Cattereck, with the advice of the President, requested Messrs. Squance and Lusher to address the Society in the chapel on the Tuesday evening, for the purpose of communicating correct information and allaying as much as possible the dissatisfaction and turbulent spirit which was abroad among the people. The scene, however, which took place on that occasion in the Wesleyan chapel can never be forgotten by any who witnessed it. The meeting was commenced with singing and prayer by Messrs. Cattereck and Barrett; but upon Messrs. Lusher and Squance being introduced, according to notice given the evening previous, the most tremendous uproar immediately took place, occasioned by two or three of the most violent of the agitators roaring out to the people not to hear the preachers unless free discussion were allowed, that is, unless they were permitted to interrupt the preachers in their addresses whenever they pleased, fearing lest Dr. Warren and themselves should be exposed as they deserved to the meeting. This was for some time resisted. At last Messrs. Squance and Lusher agreed that if they might be allowed to speak, their opponents should be permitted to reply. But a hearing was not to be obtained on any terms. Hissing, stamping, groans, yells, and huzzas, from every part of the chapel, rendered it impossible for them to be heard, except by the few by whom they were immediately surrounded. The preachers were reviled as mercenaries, inquisitors, as members of the Pope's Legion, the Devil's Legion, &c. Amidst this "strife of tongues" and bedlam uproar, Mr. Squance and Lusher happily preserved their temper and self-possession, though they every moment expected to have to meet the *argumentum baculinum* from two of their opponents. To terminate this disgraceful scene of confusion and impiety, the preachers declared the meeting dissolved and retired from the chapel.

July 15th.

(Further particulars may be expected in our next.)

MR. WOOD'S LETTER TO DR. WARREN.

We have been favoured with a copy of the following letter, addressed by the Rev. James Wood to Dr. Warren. We present it to our readers as a specimen of the spirit by which Methodist preachers *ought* to be, and in general *are*, actuated. Well would it have been for Dr. W. if he had either imitated the example, or followed the advice of its venerable writer. The opponents of the Theological Institution have repeatedly, and with a feeling of triumph, quoted the name and opinions of Mr. Wood as favourable to their cause. When they read the statement of his mode of acting, let them learn to "go and do likewise."

"Bristol, November 20, 1834.

"My Dear Sir—My view of the Theological Institution is exactly the same as it was at the late Conference; and I am thankful that I had an opportunity of bearing my dying testimony against it. But when the vote of the Conference had decidedly passed in its favour, I thought it right to submit and be passive, and this has marked my conduct ever since. Without submission, in similar cases, on the part of the minority, anarchy and confusion must predominate. This has already appeared in your circuit; and extremely sorry am I to find that you have placed yourself at the head of a party. The waters of strife are let out; wrangling and contention are promoted; and the leven of malice and wickedness is cast into the lump. The subject of conversation is, I fear, greatly changed—instead of grateful acknowledgements of past mercies, murmurings and complainings—instead of provoking one another to love and good works, too many are employed in sowing the seeds of jealousy and suspicion. Alienation of affection from the Saviour and from one another is the bitter fruit of a party spirit. "*A house divided against itself cannot*" possibly "*stand*." I cannot, my dear sir, but view the evils which are now produced among the Methodists in your neighbourhood as the effects of your publication soon after the last Conference. And I do from my heart assure you that I would not have the responsibility which attaches to your conduct for all the wealth of Manchester; no, nor for all the wealth of the world.

"Yet, far as the evil has extended, it may be cured. If my friend, Dr. Warren, will but humbly acknowledge that he has done wrong, and cease at once to be a party

man, the waters of strife will recede; and the streams of peace and Christian kindness again flow through all our Societies. Feeble as I am in body,* if you will give me any ground to hope, I will take coach for Manchester, and kneel at your feet to gain this point. To this point you must come, or be MISERABLE. Suffer me in one of the last acts of my life, to be a *peacemaker*. How would my heart rejoice to be so employed!

"With kindest love to Mrs. Warren, I am,

"Your ever affectionate brother,

"J. WOOD.

"To Dr. Warren."

VISIT OF THE ASSOCIATION TO THE ISLE OF MAN.

(Extracted from Private Correspondence.)

"I have delayed writing until now, being desirous of furnishing you with the results of the visit of the 'Grand Central' to this isolated spot. You have probably heard that Messrs. Squance and Lusher were on the Island, on a Missionary deputation in Ramsay. These gentlemen arrived in Douglas, on their return to England, as the Association *clique* were commencing their mischievous operations. Mr. Lamb (wolf?) preached on Wednesday evening in Mr. Heaniug's chapel, which was lent to this *quondam* member of the Preacher's Annuitant Society, not so much from kindness to the factious demagogues who compose the friends of the Association in Douglas, as from hatred and jealousy toward Methodism in the Isle of Man. We wish Mr. Heaning all the joy he may feel on thus mixing himself up with a faction in a town where he assumes the character of a minister of the Gospel of Peace. A public meeting was announced to be held on the evening of Friday. This was the appointed quarterly fast day of the Methodist Society; their meetings for prayer were held in the chapel, and much of the Divine presence was enjoyed; the services were numerous attended by those who were grieved at the assurance of those mischievous and misled men, attempting to throw the torch of discord into that hitherto peaceful Society. On account of those meetings for prayer, the designs of the Association were frustrated; and the public meeting was postponed until the following week. Tickets of admission were issued by one John Cain, who was recently (for the well being of the body politic) very opportunely removed out of the Methodist Society. The speakers were from the choice heroes of the 'Grand Central.' Wallace, who, in Staffordshire, speaking of the preachers, told an assembly of Kilhamites, &c., who were met to further the designs of the faction, that he 'had a little Scotch blood in his viens, and that he had taken hold of the broadsword, and that he would never sheath it until the tyrants' heads were brought low.' You will perceive, Mr. Editor, that this valiant hero of the Association is not so genteel in his way of despatching Methodist preachers as the chairman of the Liverpool Association. Thompson, of Northwich, was also present, who was in no way inferior to Wallace in his invectives against Methodism and its preachers. Those, with a man of the name of Cruickshanks, and James Lamb, poured forth such a torrent of calumny and falsehood as disgusted the greater part of the auditory, and confirmed the faith of a few waverers, who, by reason of the slanderous proceedings of the factions, were led to doubt the stability and usefulness of 'Methodism as it is.' Omenously enough, owing to the giving way of the legs of one of the benches on which some persons were seated, a cry was raised, and many imagined the floor of the room was falling, and a general rush to the doors and windows was the result. Happily, no persons were seriously injured, only the collection suffered; it amounted to *twenty-three shillings*, leaving those strolling orators *minus* the travelling expenses, which will doubtless be made up by the *pennies* of the poor deluded private members of that Association.

"A few of the trustees of the Castletown chapel resident in that town, traitorously, and during the absence of the resident preacher, gave consent to James Lamb occupying that place, both by preaching and holding a public meeting. Those deluded men were baffled in their iniquitous designs by some of the trustees of the chapel, resident in Douglas, who speedily brought those disaffected trustees to alter their conduct; so that James Lamb and his coadjutors were glad to take shelter first in the Market-house, and afterwards to resort to the Primitive Methodist chapel, after taking a sort of forcible possession of it. This visit, like many others of the same kind which you have announced in your increasingly popular periodical, was a complete failure."

* When this letter was written, Mr. Wood was in the 84th year of his age, had travelled, as a Methodist Preacher, 53 years, and been a supernumerary 9 more. He came to the Sheffield Conference chiefly to uphold, once more, by his voice and vote, the principles of Wesleyan Methodism.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

SIR—A question of serious importance must often suggest itself to every lover of our Zion, in the midst of the confusion of the times and the evils of division—it is: how may these mischiefs be most successfully counteracted? If you judge the following thoughts worthy a place in the *Illuminator*, they are much at your service.

1.—In the itinerant agitations with which the Connexion is threatened, it is natural to suppose, that great numbers of the well-affected Members of Society may be induced, from motives of curiosity, to attend meetings convened for the purpose of disturbance. Would it not be well for all such persons conscientiously to abstain from all such attendance, lest, by their presence, they should be considered as giving them countenance, and bidding them "God speed?" Moral weight is acquired, and impression made on the public mind, by the numbers frequenting public meetings of such description, and pious and peaceful Christians should guard against heightening the effect.

2.—From the excitement kept up by these agitations, it is to be feared, that the general conversation of our people is too much absorbed by these topics, instead of improving the opportunities of private and friendly intercourse for purposes of general spiritual edification. Religious experience—the great themes of the gospel—plans for the improvement of our youth, and the general good—together with the prospects of the world, and the great missionary cause, are too much forgotten, and the little and irritating subjects of the present controversy introduced in their place. Is it not extremely desirable to attempt to remedy this evil; and, at least, to soften and sweeten the intercourse of private life, by conversation which may tend to elevate the mind and improve the heart. Indirectly, this would stop the plague of angry debate, and tend to unite our beloved brethren in the bond of fraternal affection, a feeling likely to be greatly lessened, and in the loss of which many of our evils originate.

3.—As there can be no question, but these agitations are a great and sore affliction to our Zion, ought they not to be considered as a call to deep humiliation before God? The reformers are calling our attention to what they affect to consider connexional evils; ought we not to take occasion from this, to humble ourselves on account of our personal sins in reference to Methodism? Have we been as thankful for its privileges as we ought? Have we been as true to its spiritual interests as was our duty—by a devout and holy spirit—by employing its means to attain the elevated experience of the gospel—by conscientiously attending its ordinances—by an entire and habitual separation from the world, and consecration of our talents to the purposes of true religion—by training our families in the fear of God, and a respect for the Society for which we profess to be attached—and by a cordial and hearty co-operation with its ministers and faithful members in carrying out its triumphs? Have we been careful, by no loose and careless expressions to injure its interests, and excite, in the minds of the weak, suspicious and dislike; or, what is even worse, supported it by a carnal zeal, or left it to the tender mercies of its enemies, undefended by us at all? In times of personal affliction we are naturally led to examine our state, humble our souls, and confess our sins; and, in the present afflictions of our church, a similar spirit and conduct is most proper in itself, and must tend to stop the plague and heal the breach.

4.—It is always found that personal influence is very great, both for good and evil, and especially as regards the young and the feeble. Should not the danger to which these characters are exposed cause both the preachers and the leaders to be particularly assiduous in pastoral attention? Not that it is at all desirable to keep up a constant conversation with the people, except in suspected cases of alienation on the matters in dispute; but to manifest sympathy with them, to direct their attention to spiritual objects, and to unite them more closely to the church.

5.—In consequence of the divisions occasioned in some places, and the dangers to which others are exposed, it is obviously the duty of all official persons, and, indeed, of the private members too, more diligently to attend the calls of duty and never to be absent from any of the services of the house of God, except from necessity. When a storm rages, the captain is never found snugly sleeping in his cabin; but is constantly on deck himself, and all hands are at the post of duty. Every Member of the Connexion is now called upon to stand firmly in the breach, and, by all the means in his power, to show that Methodism is "religion in earnest."

6.—As the present movement amongst the Societies has manifested a strange looseness of principle on the part of great numbers, involving questions of religious duty and obligation of the highest importance; would it not be proper to attempt the supply of this defect, by drawing the attention of the people, not convulsively, by violent means—but gently, through the press and the pulpit, by a republication of some of Mr. Wesley's writings, or original productions; and by the preachers making their ministry more pointed and specific on questions of church communion, and moral obligation? If a good foundation on these points cannot be laid in the minds of the Members of Society, they will be exposed to a shaking similar to the present on every subsequent agitation.

7.—But, above all, as religion is most emphatically the work of God, it is now the unquestionable duty of all the lovers of our Zion to be found diligent in prayer for the copious effusions of the Holy Spirit, to give effect to the word and ordinances, to establish those who do stand and rouse those who are "dead in trespasses and sins."—Hoping these brief hints may awaken attention, and call forth the thoughts of yourself and correspondents in general.—I am, yours, &c.,
URBANE.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications have been received from "Epsilon,"—"Philaethes,"—"A Local Preacher of the Huddersfield Circuit," &c. &c. Our correspondent Tyro's extracts have already been inserted in the *Illuminator*.—We must apologise to our other correspondents whose valuable articles we have not been yet able to insert. They shall have our earliest attention.

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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THE AGITATORS.

IN the remarks we feel it our duty to address to our friends on the agitators now perambulating the nation, for the purpose of sowing strife and discord amongst our Societies, we beg to remind them that these men were the original assailants. As might be expected, the opposition they have met with—the small amount of success, compared with the calculations they had made—and the firm and noble stand set up in all parts of the Connexion, in support of good old Methodism, have united to exasperate their feelings; and the agitation is becoming, like the expiring furies of a storm, more loud and angry as it pours forth the peals of its last *year*. When the question was asked in the late Delegate Meeting in Sheffield, what the causes of their want of success in their past exertions to rouse and revolutionize the Connexion could be, the conclusion to which the grave assembly came, was, as we have been credibly informed, that it was IGNORANCE on the part of the Wesleyan Body! Mark that, ye doltish Methodists! Your minds are too obtuse at present to perceive and comprehend the vast advantages of the Association and its schemes; and so, just to enlighten this ignorance, they forthwith determined to send certain agents, *hired* and *paid*, for that purpose, to deliver lectures through the country. Now on this office of *Christian agitator*, and the objects it proposes, we have a few words to say.

1.—This mission to agitate the Wesleyan Societies is calculated to injure the *general* interests of Christianity, and is directly sinful on that account.

No man, or class of men, can have the right to make their own personal grievances—supposing them to be real—an occasion of reproach or scandal to the religion of Jesus Christ. Every professor, be his opinions what they may, is bound, on the ground of his avowed allegiance to Christianity, to do nothing to injure its general features of purity, union, and love. The division of the church into sects cannot annul this obvious rule. This diversity of profession may, indeed, be convenient as a means to facilitate this most desirable end, but it cannot set aside the obligation. Men can never be brought to judge

alike on doctrinal and economical questions; and their separation from persons with whom they cannot agree, and their union with those of similar sentiments, ought to end all strife and induce a state of peace. A calm, christian, and argumentative statement of their views, is, no doubt, allowable and proper in those who conscientiously think their own opinions of divine truth to be right, and those of others erroneous; but they can have no authority to violate the charity, and brotherly unity inculcated by the gospel itself, for the sake of their own sectarian and party views. This is much lost sight of; and the terms religion, Christianity, the gospel, and church, mean, in the vocabulary of most persons, no other than their own sect and its little and limited concerns. We beg to remind all such that there is a Christianity of the Bible which refuses to be screwed down to sectarian purposes, and speaks to all men alike. The Christian profession, in all its varieties, ought to rest on this general truth; and if any particular section of the church cannot bear its light, the light ought not to be turned into darkness for the sake of party interests, but those interests ought to be abandoned for the sake of the "*common salvation*."

The questions in dispute amongst us have been too much debated as exclusively Connexional and Methodistic. Hence appeals are constantly being made to this and the other Rule of the Body, by both parties, one in the character of plaintiff, and the other of defendant. Whilst this has been going on, the lessons of the scriptures have been forgotten, the interests of general Christianity merged, and the effects on the destinies of the universal church passed over. But it ought to be recollected that the Wesleyan Societies are a part of the Christianity of this nation and of the world; and, consequently, that which affects the one must affect the other. We are not amongst the number of those who believe that one section of the true church is benefited by the depression and ruin of the others. Neither can we bring ourselves to admit, that the divisions of Christianity into little sections and parties can advance the good of the whole. These divisions themselves originate in some evil, and evil cannot produce good. No doubt one of the greatest banes of the Christian world has been its schisms and sectarian spirit. The separation of the parties is not the only mischief; but a spirit of exclusiveness, jealousy animosity, and rivalry is generated, which scarcely ever is extinguished. The energies of Christianity have long been expended in broils and civil wars, instead of being put forth in opposition to sin, and in seeking the conversion of heathen and other nations. An abstraction of all the volumes which have been written in controversy on the litigated points of party debate, would leave our theological literature extremely meagre. Had the learning, the intellect, the time, and the money which have been expended in this more than useless gladiatorship, been applied to the useful purposes of ameliorating the state of the world, communicating the benefits of education, and preaching the gospel, they would have led to the greatly improved, and extensively Christianized state of man-

kind. The belligerent parties agreed to suspend hostilities for a season in this country, and the aspect of affairs, and, the hopes excited, were truly cheering. A retrogression has since then taken place, the sectarian spirit has again inflated itself, the harsh notes of the religious war whoop are heard in every quarter, and the militant church seems to be arming herself at every point, not to take the field against the common foe, but to expend her resources and heroism in domestic hostilities. It was imagined by many able and charitable men, that elements of wisdom and piety were in active operation which would speedily neutralize, and, indeed, destroy illiberality of spirit and lead the universal church to take her stand on the great and sublime principles and schemes of the gospel. These gentlemen must have been greatly disappointed. Christians are evidently shrivelling themselves up again to the narrow dimensions of party, and the zeal which now gains favour is, the fire of invective, and the dogmatism of bigotry. It seems as if God must send another dispensation of religion to redeem the Christian. Not, indeed, to rectify its truths, add to its grace, or prepare a richer provision for man, but to purify its profession, and raise its disciples from their littleness, to an elevation with its grand designs. The present state of the Wesleyan Body has grieved us deeply on its own account, but more especially as it stands connected with general Christianity in the world. We were of the number of those who indulged the fond hope that our Connexion, in conjunction with other churches, having passed the line of sectarian jealousy, as well as internal strife, would, in united strength, march forward to accomplish the predicted purposes of the gospel. We are not now without hope; but that hope is mixed with fear and apprehension. Our disgraceful contentions must greatly impede the general cause of Christ, not merely by the amount of injury suffered by ourselves; but, also, by weakening the moral impression of religion on the world, and heightening the universal commotion existing through the churches of Christendom.

It would be useless to hide from ourselves the painful fact that this, and all similar divisions, must greatly tend to weaken our power of general usefulness. We are not referring to the supply of pecuniary means for carrying on our Missionary operations; these may be forthcoming as amply as before; but the mischief we contemplate, is spiritual and religious. Suppose the separatists in any of our large towns, had continued to give a pious and faithful support to the cause of God amongst us—in their families, in their neighbourhood, in the church, and in the world—and this pious influence had been perpetuated for ages to come, by their descendents; who does not perceive that the good resulting must have been incalculably great. But the positive loss of this influence is not the whole of the case: a spirit of strife and debate has been created which must tend greatly to draw the attention of both preachers and people to topics other than those connected with the spread of the gospel and the glory of God. Indeed, these effects begin to appear already in various ways. The Connexion had lived down the bitterness of spirit created by the New Connexion division; but already our contentions have awakened and renewed the hostile zeal of that party; and, in no measured terms, they have again come forward to assail the body, heighten the public impression

against us, and aid to the utmost of their power—and not always in the most honourable manner—our present enemies, in producing confusion and separation.

In our own Societies the mischief cannot but be great, in drawing the attention of the people to points of unprofitable disputation, enervating their piety, fanning an unholy zeal, leading their thoughts into new channels, and damping the ardour of their love to God and the souls of men. Then the reflex and indirect effect of all this must be felt through the great Missionary department; and, in consequence, through the world. The agitators glory (!) in having thrown an indefinite quantum of odium on our common Christianity; in heightening and exasperating the spirit of party; in removing the different sects to a greater distance from each other; in opening old wounds and making new incisions in the body of Christ; in raising up another hostile sect against the Connexion which led them into the fold of Christ; in producing numerous evils in the Societies they have left, and in doing all in their power to stop the progress of Christianity, as connected with us, through the world. We know not how they contemplate these consequences; but to us they would be most appalling; and, as it is, they are the cause of unfeigned grief and sorrow.

2.—The churches mentioned in the New Testament are spoken of as *sanctified*, and their members addressed as *saints*. If these terms do not describe the experimental and separate state of every individual of the churches, they are significant of the profession itself, and teach as fully that all such persons ought to seek after holiness. In his address to the Romans, St. Paul says—"To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be *saints*." In his two Epistles to the Corinthians we find the same Apostle recognising the same character. "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are *sanctified* in Christ Jesus, called to be *saints*, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, both their's and our's." "Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the *saints*, which are in all Achaia." We have similar expressions in the other Epistles. To the Ephesians—"to the *saints* which are at Ephesus, and to the *faithful* in Christ Jesus." To the Phillippians—"to all the *saints* in Christ Jesus which are at Phillippi, with the bishops and deacons." To the Colossians—"to the *saints* and *faithful* brethren in Christ Jesus which are in Colosse." St. Peter says of the general church—"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an *holy nation*, a *peculiar* people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which, in time past, were not a people, but are now the *people of God*: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

Not merely on the ground of its separation from the world, its baptismal engagements, and professed consecration to God; but, more especially, in virtue of its redemption by Christ—its adoption of his holy laws as the rule of experience and faith—its becoming the "temple of the Holy Ghost," and the family and house of God, the "salt of the earth," as well as its enabling the members to "make their calling and election sure,"—the church is a spiritual and holy communion. By their professions, and the objects they avowedly propose, all our members are pledged to observe the rule of purity and holiness. They are engaged to this as it respects their own personal conduct; and equally so as regards the general community. Holiness is a fundamental law of Christianity. It is the rule on which God made man in his own image; it is the law on which he was banished from paradise after the transgression; it is the basis of redemption; it enters into the entire method of our salvation by faith, and sanctification by the Spirit; it is the primary element of all religious feeling, experience, and life; it is "the first and great commandment" of the new dispensation; it is "the bond of perfectness" in the church itself, and without it there can be no happiness on earth or in heaven. Besides, the spirit, habit, and fruits of holiness are not merely the ornament and glory of Christians, personally, but the *strength* of the Christian cause. Men are awakened and attracted to Christianity, not so much by its abstract truths finding their way to their understandings, as by its mercy, benevolence, and purity arresting their attention and impressing their consciences and hearts. When the church, embracing the entire scheme of redemption, passes from its present low and grovelling state of attainment, into the fulness of the grace of Christ, the perfection of Christian love, and the life and power of a state of elevated sanctity, then her interests will be most effectually supported, and "the world will be filled with the knowledge and glory of God."

As this spirit and state of Christian holiness is of much more value to the cause of Christ than any thing else, it follows that those who do any thing detrimental to the purity of the church are infringing its essential laws, injuring its best interests, and committing most grievous sin against the glory of its founder. Whether the agitators who are now systematically engaged in their vocation, are acting in conformity with the law of holiness, and promoting the sanctification of the church, and its fitness for heaven, let our readers judge. When a minister is appointed to any place, he feels it binding on his conscience, as a faithful steward, to warn his flock of the dangers of sin—to set before them the grace of Christ—to exhort and invite them to embrace the promises—to attend diligently to the means of grace, and guard against a worldly spirit—to avoid the indulgence of angry, malevolent, and impure passions—and also, to use the utmost prudence and caution in his own conversation and spirit, lest he should be the means of exciting any wrong feeling, or alluring souls astray. When he has done his best, he has generally to mourn the small amount of his success, and the predominance of evil. How does the agitator proceed in his work? Does he guard against calling up unhallowed feelings?—No; he selects topics—composes his lecture—employs all the arts of eloquence—culls the language for epithets—puts all the powers of his mind in requisition, and assumes a vehemence of gesture, manner, and voice, purposely to enrage the people, rouse their ire, kindle their wrath, and call them to give utterance to an indignant spirit. They may say their cause is holy, and the end justifies the means. We have only one reply to make; it is, a spiritual and holy cause can only be promoted by spiritual and holy means. It might as well be affirmed that the boasted apostles of the church of Rome were serving the interests of religion when they rode to their victories in the midst of the desolations of war, as that these men are promoting the cause of Christ and christian holiness, by calling up the whirlwind of passion, and riding in triumph in the storm. It is utterly impossible for these anarchists to succeed, without greatly weakening the strength, and sullying the beauties of the piety existing in the Societies they visit. At their door, will be all the sin which has been occasioned by this unholy strife. To their account, will be charged all the influence lost by religion—all her impaired strength to do good—and also, all the souls which will perish eternally. It is in vain to attempt to evade this point; multitudes who were in the church will be driven from it, to return no more; many enjoying religion will lose its savour and power; inquirers, and those who were seeking the Lord, will be altogether put out of the way; gospel-hardened sinners will be confirmed in their sins; infidels will be excited to blasphemy; the gay and secular world will laugh and despise; and the interests of our general Christianity will suffer a noxious blight.

We shudder whilst we think of a knot of agitators attempting, by all the means in their power, to find out the weak and disaffected members in particular Societies, and through their instrumentality burrow their way. They enter with the torch of discord flaming in their hand, and instantly set themselves to the task of throwing the whole Society into a blaze. They succeed. A division is effected, and in the place of praise, prayer, brotherly affection, and kind co-operation in the house of God—debate, strife, and the war of words commence. The chapel is deserted; the ministry enfeebled; the public scandalized and deterred from attending; old and respectable families are broken up, part remaining and part gone; schools are scattered; the young people engaged in teaching, have taken fire at the sound of liberty, and joined with open mouth in the yell after tyrants, whilst the poor lambs of the flock flee with consternation, or are deliberately given up to the devouring wolf.

When this havoc and ruin is accomplished, the demon agitator walks over the field of desolation with an air of exultation—issues his bulletins to announce his success—spirits forward his legions to new assaults—and, as he succeeds in his career of destruction, triumphs in the departed strength, beauty, and glory of the church as a work of God. The heartless blasphemy of this assumption is most appalling. God never works two ways which lie in opposite directions. If he promotes the cause of truth, happiness, and salvation, by such methods as are taught in his own word, he cannot do so by those adopted by the Association; for they are as opposed to each other as the antipodes of the earth. If he enlightens, comforts, and sanctifies his church, by a ministry and ordinances founded on the mercy, grace, and provisions of the gospel, then he cannot do so by the agency of agitation; for they are as great a contrast to each other as the benevolence and holiness of God, and the selfish malevolence of fallen man. No; if there be truth in the Bible—if the spirit, example, and life of our Saviour exhibit the Divine purity—if the doctrines and precepts he taught, speak in plain and unequivocal language the will of God—if the end of redemption is to save us from all sin—if the fruits of the spirit are “love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance”—if the kingdom of Christ is “no of this

world," but "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost"—then these men who are adopting a course as opposite to all this as "Christ and Belial," stand convicted of a gross, palpable, and flagrant attempt to pollute and defile our Christianity itself.

3.—The Christian church is represented as the *HOUSE* and *FAMILY* of God. This is often and variously stated. "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how to behave thyself in the *house* of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." "But in a great *house* there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour and some to dishonour. If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." "But Christ as a Son over his own *house*, whose *house* are we, if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." "Having a great High Priest over the *house* of God." "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the *house* of God, and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel." "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the *household* of God." "For this cause, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole *family* in heaven and earth is named." In exact agreement with these representations, is the correlative titles of *children* of God, and *brethren*.—"And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my *sons* and *daughters*, saith the Lord Almighty." "For ye are all the *children* of God, by faith in Christ Jesus." "Wherefore, thou art no more a servant, but a *son*; and if a *son*, then an heir of God, through Christ." "What manner of love hath the Father bestowed upon us, that we should be called *sons* of God!" "But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are *brethren*." "Wherefore, *holy brethren*, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." "I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the *holy brethren*." But it is unnecessary to multiply quotations, when it must be in the recollection of every reader of the New Testament that the common appellation given to Christians when their relation to each other is mentioned, is that of *brethren*.

One of the obvious obligations arising out of the Christian relation to God, as members of his *house* and *family*, is—to manifest the spirit of his children, to obey his will, and cautiously to guard against a behaviour which may dishonour his name. We have no doubt but the members of the Association, together with their agents of agitation, consider themselves as children and members of the house and family of God, and for any thing which has hitherto been stated, they allow the Wesleyan Societies to be a part of the same family. If they have doubts on this point, and imagine that we are Turks, heathens, or infidels, then, their duty is not to reform our polity, but to seek the conversion of our souls. We take their admission, and assume that, previously to the divisions occasioned by this confusion, the Wesleyan Societies were a part of the household of God. Now, allowing this, we should be glad to know what warrant or right any one part of the family can have to wage war against another, and commence a regular system of operations for the purpose of producing discord and division? If the anarchists believe, that the Connexion is really deceived—that it has no ground for the claim of being of "the household of faith"—that its history and establishment have nothing Christian and Divine connected with them—that there are no marks and evidences of a work of God in the union of converted men, in the acknowledgment of the faith—that the professions made of the attainment of a state of grace, the joys of salvation, the peace of God, and Christian sanctification, by such great numbers, is all a piece of hypocrisy—that the apparent fruits of the spirit manifesting themselves in active duty, self-denial, suffering, and dying triumphs, are the pretences of persons either deceived themselves or attempting to deceive others—we say, if these are the views of the party, then their duty is not to agitate, but to evangelize. If the Wesleyan faith is falsehood, its economy anti-christian, its discipleship a union of knaves and infidels, its services and ordinances superstitious, its designs popish, and its professors in a state of dangerous sin, and exposure to ruin and condemnation—then it is the duty of the Warren party to exercise towards them the merey and pity of the gospel, and attempt by all means to enlighten and convert them. If the Association will appropriate its funds for this purpose, and Dr. Warren, John Gordon, David Rowland, and their coadjutors will undertake a mission to rectify the theology of the Connexion, teach a more safe and scriptural way of salvation, provide richer ordinances for the edification of the people, and, after erecting the house of God on its true foundation, conduct the poor ignorant and outcast Methodists safely within its sacred precincts, feed them with the "strong meat" of the gospel, we promise to give to their mission our attentive consideration and docile obedience. Let them lay aside their knight-errantry and give themselves to this duty, and we shall then understand the footing on

which the two parties stand to each other. We maintain that they can only justify their proceedings by putting us out of the pale of the Christian fellowship. They must first of all show, that we have no right to a name and a place in the house of God, and they will have a right to found a new apostleship to evangelize and bring us in. But even then, legitimate means only can be allowed. The first churches were not formed by a negative gospel. The Apostles of our Lord did not gain their converts to Christianity by abusing the Jews and heathens, of their day, or by attempting to agitate these respective systems to their "*centre*." They taught something positive; and in persuading these classes of persons to embrace the faith of Christ, they took care to exhibit its objects, to set forth its privileges, to lay its foundations, and to persuade them to abandon one course by presenting the advantages of a better. It is a cruel mockery of our miseries and misfortunes to treat us as outcast men, without presenting us with a clue to the truth, and teaching us how we may be restored to our heavenly Father's house. They treat the Wesleyan Societies as a covey of unclean birds nestling in the holy place of the sanctuary, which deserve to be driven out. With them, agitation is a means and an end both. They present nothing beyond it. Previously to ejecting us from our abode, they ought to have prepared another. They treat our system as anti-christian and popish, and, consequently, ourselves as pseudo Christians and papists, without teaching and offering us any thing in its place. Now, as in our humble judgment, agitation cannot feed our souls with knowledge, grace, pious enjoyment, and consolation, we are, for ourselves, at least, disposed to keep within the precincts of the old habitation—believing it to be one of the compartments of the *house of God*, till it can be shown to the contrary, and a fairer and more commodious home presented to our acceptance.

But we believe the revolutionists will not argue that the Methodist Societies are no part of the "*household of faith and the family of God*." They will allow us this relationship. Then, on its admission, we must claim from them the treatment of persons enjoying these privileges, and they must show on what authority they possess the liberty to disturb the peace, communion, and pious pursuits of this part of the "*house of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth*." If they tell us they belong to the same family themselves, and on that ground proceed to put the whole into a state of disorder, we must beg to deny the assumption, and ask for proof. Did they not enjoy an equality of rights with all their brethren of the same family? Had they not a full share in the inheritance without any let or hinderance? Before this schism commenced, there was not an Associationist who did not possess as indefeasible and perfect a citizenship in our church as any other person: great numbers were in possession of honourable and influential offices; they were open to all the rest; and the path of exalted piety, glowing zeal, extensive usefulness, and enjoyment, were within the reach of all. If they complain of the restrictions of law, we answer—the law was not made for them, but for the whole community. If they only were called to bear the burden of rule and restraint, whilst others were exempt, they might complain; but if they only share it in common with all the children of the family, then they have no just cause for rebellion. They were not selected as victims—made the subjects of civil oppressions—ground down by the iron hand of tyranny—or debarred any of the privileges of the liege subjects or free-born children of the Christian family.

As they can make out no case of special oppression to provoke their riotous conduct, so they can mark out no peculiar right. Allowing them to be equal to others, it cannot be admitted that they possess any singular distinctions. It consequently follows, that they have no ground for these proceedings. They have not been proscribed and persecuted, neither have they any isolated immunities of their own.—Then, on the principle that we are, in reality, a branch of the true church and a part of the family of God, and admitted to be so by these parties themselves, they stand chargeable with a wanton and wicked aggression on the peace and order of the "*house of God*."

Suppose a part of the same family, and children of the same parents, were to rise up on a sudden, and arming themselves with missiles of mischief, without previous notice or just provocation, were to begin to break the furniture of the house, knock down its pillars, despoil its ornaments, overthrow its walls, and then with repeated blows injure and maim their brethren. It would be instantly allowed, by all honest men, that these riotous youths had infringed the family compact, had broken through all domestic order, had committed an injury on the common inheritance, had thrown discredit on the honour and authority of their father, had outrageously violated the laws of fraternal love, and were only fit subjects for the police and the prison. This is but a faint picture of the lawless proceedings of these rebellious children of our common father. Look at Oldham-street, Manchester; Leeds-street, Liverpool; or one

of the chapels in Dudley. The family of God, domiciled in these respective places, enjoyed a perfect equality of rights, worshipped in the same temple, knelt at the same altars and partook the same communion, enjoyed the same fellowship—and yet, a part of the household suddenly rose in violent opposition to the rest, grasped the iron bolts of the law, usurped the pulpits, coercively administered the ordinances and discipline of the church by their own party agents, robbed the house of its inmates, and attempted to “*stop the supplies* ;” and then, by every epithet of abuse and slander, assailed the peaceful members of the household as persons with whom no “*honest man*” could hold communion. Desolation has, to a certain extent followed, and one of the chief sources of joy to these heroes of discord, is, that they have succeeded in thinning our congregations, scattering the Societies, leading the people from the Lord’s table, and producing a moral blight where the verdure of piety bloomed before. That which occasions other persons sorrow, mourning, tears, and many prayers, is to them a cause of triumph, and administers food to their perverted taste, “*sweeter than honey or the honey comb*.”

The mischief which has been partially achieved in some places is attempted in others, and these sons of Ishmael, whose “*hand is against every man’s hand*,” are now endeavouring to break into the “*house of God*,” in every place, and on system, throw it into confusion and tumult. Like midnight depredators, they scientifically sally forth, with the implements of their calling; and, as opportunities arise, use them for the purpose of breaking into the sacred precincts of some quiet habitation of the saints, and ruining their heritage. The reader is to recollect that the Wesleyan Societies are acknowledged, by the Associationists themselves, as a part of the family of God. And will He, their heavenly Father, look on, unmoved, while these depredations are committed? Not if there is truth in his word. On any ground, these agents of anarchy are in the wrong. If the Societies they visit are in a state of error, sin, and absolute estrangement from God—if the system they have been taught and have embraced is anti-christian, and the preachers and Conference as bad as they represent them, yet still, they owe them the mercy and compassion of the gospel. They are bound, even in dealing with heathens, to attempt their conversion while they denounce their creed. But from the beginning to this moment, the Association have proposed nothing tangible. They have dealt in abstractions and general declamation, but have offered no amended scheme of their own. Then, as these Societies are part of the true church and family of God, they will have another account to give, and before another tribunal. When they open *Pandora’s box*, and let fly all the evils of discord amongst a pious and peaceful Christian Society, they must recollect that these people have a peculiar interest in the regard and love of God. He may allow these agitators to be his rod, “*for whom he loveth he scourgeth* ;” but, when the rod has done its work, it will be broken to shivers, while the children will possess the eternal patrimony of their father’s love.

4.—The church is described as the creation and temple of the Holy Spirit. The buildings consecrated to worship, and the liturgies and forms of religion may exist, independently of the work of the Spirit, but there cannot be a living church possessed of the graces of true piety, but it must be the work of his influence. St. Paul’s beautiful description is applicable to all times and all true churches: “*Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: In whom the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*” “*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God; him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*” “*For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them; and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*” On this view of the church we offer one or two considerations to the attention of our readers. If the Wesleyan Societies are formed of persons who are, more or less, the subjects of a divine influence, then, they constitute a living spiritual church of God. Facts must determine whether this is the case or not. It is impossible to answer for individuals, or to deny that there may be many superficial, and even counterfeit and hypocritical members. But allowing for all this, it must be granted by every candid person, that, the union of the Societies is founded on a real work of God. Although Methodism has existed for a century, there is, even up to this period, very little hereditary profession amongst us, and few of the children of our people are found in our ranks except, such as give decided evidence of a work of grace. The great body of the people are gathered in from the world. Most of these had no pretensions to religion even in its form, but were living in utter ungodliness and sin. Methodism has always

found the vast majority of her disciples in the lowest state of moral degradation. She has always numbered amongst her brightest ornaments, most spiritual and pious members, and zealous and successful agents, persons who had lived in a state of gross vice. What has produced the change, but the Spirit of God. Light and conviction have flashed on minds dark as midnight, and given them "the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." New emotions of penitence, restless desire, enquiry after truth, the fears and alarms of conscience, contrition and melting of mind under a sense of guilt, have been awakened in souls utterly dead to God, and dead in sin. Faith in Christ, not merely as to the general truth and subjects of his mission, but as their own personal Saviour, "made of God to them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," has been professed and exercised by thousands who had been "shut up in unbelief." All the features of a regenerated state, in the tranquillization of the passions, the subjugation of the appetites, the change of the life, and especially the creation of all the graces of a spiritual mind, have been made to appear in the experience and habits of multitudes who had previously been "foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." And, in a countless number of spirits strangers to all happiness, and dead to every sacred emotion, feelings of joy have been awakened which have thrown their bright light, not merely on the path of life, but also on the darkness of the grave. Thank God, whatever may become of us, tens of thousands of our brethren, who have gone before us, have entered safely into rest, and in their end have "witnessed a good profession before many witnesses."

On the ground of this work the Societies have been united. No other motive could lead persons to connect themselves with the Wesleyan community than "the desire to flee from the wrath to come." This body has never yet enjoyed the popular favour, and has consequently had no worldly temptations to offer as inducements to join its communion. We have as much evidence as the subject will allow, that the great *living and operative* agency leading to the union of these Societies is the Spirit of God, and that their fellowship is founded in His work. No real religious experience can exist without this; and, consequently, the question turns on a matter of fact, viz.—whether the Wesleyan Societies, in general, do understand and experience the blessings of true piety and holiness? Who can doubt this, but the semi-infidel who denies the possibility of all religious enjoyment, or the narrow-minded bigot who can only allow the work of the Spirit to exist in union with the dogmas of his creed. One common influence has attracted the discordant elements composing these Societies, to rest on *one foundation*, unite together in *one body*, profess one faith, when undisturbed, to breathe "*one spirit*," and to exhibit similar features of fervent and devout piety; and that is the influence of the Holy Spirit. To what else are we to attribute the gradual growth of this work for a long series of years, as well as the more remarkable awakenings and revivals of religion. In ordinary times, when unobstructed by anarchy and confusion, the work of conversion has progressed in the Connexion, through the whole period of its history. Like the spring tide of life, in the natural world, producing successive scenes of beauty and seasons of fertility; so the spirit of God has, through the whole field of Methodist operations, caused the fruits of grace to spring up in regular succession. But besides the ordinary tide of life, flowing through the system, we also find, that in almost all parts of the Connexion, at different times, extensive revivals of religion have been granted and great multitudes have been brought out of "darkness into light." It may be affirmed with truth, that there is not a Wesleyan Society in any part of this country, the majority of whose members do not super-add to the excellencies of a moral life, "the knowledge of sins forgiven," the privilege of the spirit of adoption, and the marks and evidences of the new birth.

On these accounts the Wesleyan Societies, like all true Christian churches, are the creations of the Holy Spirit, and the temples of God. If so, He dwells amongst them. The scriptures intimate the deep and paramount interest felt by Him who is the author of all good, in the spiritual state of his people. A state of grace either enjoyed by an individual or a society, which embraces the exercise of the divine love in acts of justification and adoption; the work of atonement performed by Christ on the cross and on his throne; the powerful influences of the Holy Spirit in his sanctifying influence on the heart; must be an object of the divine complacency and regard. Infinitely more is involved in the state of the church, the conversion of souls, their attainment of the divine love, and the acquisition of Christian holiness than in the progress of arts, commerce, legislation, or empire in this world. God has "fixed his heart on man," in his religious interests, and connects his own highest glories with his state of grace. But, besides this, the spiritual work is sustained by the *direct* influence of the Holy Spirit. Hence there is an important sense in which the Spirit of God dwells in his people, and pervades and fills his temple. The life, purity, and

joys of the regenerate state which are produced by his direct agency, can only be continued and increased by his constant indwelling. The power which sustains, the light which guides, the love which warms, and the life which breathes in the renewed soul, is that of the Spirit of God. In like manner, the same Spirit actuates Christian Societies, wherever genuine piety is found. Up to the point of their conformity to the Christian standard of truth, their participation of gospel privileges, their possession of the mind which was in Christ, and their attainments in grace, they are as much the "habitation of God through the Spirit," as individual saints. In addition to his being the source of perpetuated life and holiness, on the principle of his "*living and walking*" in his church, and making it his temple, the Lord presents himself as the object of sensible love and enjoyment. Hence, with what delight do spiritually minded persons recognise what they properly call, the presence of God in his ordinances, and "sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus!" They "come to God, the living God, in mount Zion," and by the exercise of faith, answering to a spiritual sense, they "behold the beauty of the Lord," "listen to his still small voice," consciously feel his power resting on them, and enjoy his manifestations "as the God of love." On these accounts, and many others, societies of spiritual Christians, are the "workmanship," "husbandry," "house," "building," and "temple" of God. He created their state, conferred their privileges, sustains their religious life, inspires their joys, inhabits their souls, and beautifies them with salvation.

It follows on this, that every Christian is obliged to walk and live in a Christian society as in the temple of God. Or, in other words, that he is bound to regulate his own conduct and spirit in relation to the church, by the same rules as he does, or ought to do, in regard to the work of the Spirit in his own mind. Every Christian knows, or may know, the nature of his own obligations in respect to the work of God in his heart. He can do nothing contrary to the truth in his own case, without obscuring the distinctness with which the Spirit of truth illuminates his mind. He can do nothing in opposition to Christian love, but the Spirit of love must be "*grieved*," and his influence lessened. He can indulge in no carnal passion or worldly pursuit inordinately, but the Spirit of purity and holiness is much abated, in power and intensity. As the work of the Spirit is the same in the whole body of believers, it is to be treated in others, as it is in ourselves, and no one can have the right to "defile the temple of God."

Whether the men who are now agitating these Societies are not guilty, in this respect, of sin against the Holy Ghost, let pious and considerate persons judge. The conversion of men to God, the spiritual creation, and living state of the churches of Christ, is as much the work of the Holy Spirit as the miracles of primitive times—only in the one case, the operation took place in some part of the physical world, and in the other, it is wrought in the soul. The Jews were held guilty of "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost," because they impugned His work, having at the same time the opportunity of judging of the validity of the miracles wrought. We do not charge our agitators with similar offences, for they take care not to select the spiritual work as the object of attack; but we charge them with the sin of assaulting Societies which have been united on the ground of a work of the Spirit of God—of polluting the temple occupied by Him, and of endangering, by the introduction of strife and division, the safety of immortal souls—and, consequently, of being guilty of *sin*, if not *the sin* against the Holy Ghost. They, no doubt, will tell us, that their intention is not to assail this work of the Spirit, but, on the contrary, to demolish the outward bulwarks of these Societies, and modify them anew, on an improved plan. Yes, but in doing this, they divide and scatter the people; and if, as we contend, their union is founded on a work of the Spirit of God, then they are breaking down that which He had built up. In his existence and offices, the Holy Ghost is immutable; in individual experience, many of the divided people retain his influence and grace; but, in his work of peace, love, purity, and life, as enjoyed and manifested in the "*united*" state of the people, his work is annihilated, and the "*communion*" of the Spirit is dissolved by violence. And although individual believers may retain their faith and experience, in a separated state, yet it is put to great hazard; and the fatal consequence must be, in the case of many weak minds, that, instead of seeking another fold and retaining the spirit and life of religion, they will be driven into the world, and "make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience." In carrying on their war of extermination against the discipline, and institutions of the Connexion, the agitators reach the work of God itself, and are guilty of a wanton, daring, and profane destruction of a building and edifice reared and beautified by the Holy Spirit.

5.—The systematized and confederated agitations of the Association are in direct opposition to all the injunctions of the word of God, and obligations of Christians to the church.

There is an essential difference betwixt an *accidental* evil, arising out of the temptation and excitement of a moment, and evil prosecuted on system. It is a crime of great magnitude to split and divide a true church of Jesus Christ, through a temporary excitement; but when men unite together, and lay a regular platform of agitation and division, as others do for the purpose of extending Christianity, then it assumes the form of conventional wickedness. We have the strange novelty of a *society* of professed Christians, established and organized for the avowed purpose of accomplishing that which is expressly forbidden in the word of God. Slander, evil-speaking, wrath, strife, hatred, and divisions in the church are as explicitly prohibited as murder; and yet we have a *propagandi* formed for the purpose of producing them all. The principle of our modern societies for the dissemination of the Scriptures, and the evangelization of the world, is now adopted to stir up discord. The Committee of the Association is not established to frame a code of laws for the government of themselves—the organization of their own body into a Christian church—the preaching of the everlasting gospel—and the fulfilling in any way the law of Christ; but, for professed object of making a schism. This confederacy embraces several astounding particulars. We have a code of agitation laws. The Bible is laid aside—for we challenge any member of the fraternity to prove that their scheme is countenanced by that holy book)—and the science of worldly uproar introduced into its place. The catholic association and the political unions are giving the pattern of reform to modern Methodists. A regular machine is constructed, and all its strings touched by an organized society, to break up that field which has been cultivated with the utmost care, by a long race of holy men, who “went forth weeping, bearing precious seed.” This is a subject of extreme regret, on account of the mischief accomplished; but more especially as it shows, that a numerous class of men, once in the Wesleyan Body, had ceased to regard the authority of the laws of Christ, and evidently sacrificed the great moral obligations of the Scriptures to the phrenzy of human ambition. If the Association will prove to us that their proceedings are supported by the counsels of God, the scheme of redemption—the descriptions of the church and kingdom of Christ—the rules of reciprocal love and support enjoined on Christians—and by the moral precepts of the New Testament, then we will yield them the palm of victory, and join them in their movement. But there is no echo to this appeal; and all that is left us is, to reiterate our unalterable opinion, that the confederacy is founded in a principle of utter ungodliness, and an antinomian rejection of the laws of Christ.

If the scheme itself is thus grounded in irreligion, what are we to think of those who are its *hired agents*? These men “receive the reward of iniquity,” and “sell themselves to do mischief.” They are salaried menials of turbulence and strife. Whether they feel the degradation of their state, and the unmingled scorn and contempt they have brought upon themselves, we cannot say; but it is impossible for men to degrade themselves beyond this point. Some of them were ministers of the gospel. Their employment was to unfold the mysteries of redeeming love, to invite sinners to the Saviour, to propound the doctrines of salvation, to enforce the holy precepts of the divine law—now, they are engaged to the *profession* of agitation. Dr. Warren could not procure the professorship of Divinity at the Theological Institution, and he has pushed himself into the chair of agitation: He had been preparing for a faculty of theology, belles lettres, moral philosophy, or any thing which might arise; by his Glasgow studies, and taking his degree of I.L.D.—and now he finds himself the learned lackey, the hired servant, and the despised tool of a mob of destructionists. He walked among the Wesleyan Societies, as one of its ministers, conducted their sacred services, united in the prayers and praises of the multitudes of their people who lived in peace and love—now his ear is greeted with the yells of discord, the murmurs of discontent, the execrations of infuriate passion, and like a wizard he now finds himself surrounded by the malignant spirits raised by the incantations of his own black art. As an angel of light, he once occupied a place in the spiritual heaven of the church—held fellowship no doubt with God in Christ, “walked in the light as he is in the light;”

“Enjoyed the grace to angels given,
And served the royal heirs of heaven;”

Whether he meets God in the dark and dismal regions of strife and contention we know not, but our belief is, that we could not find him there, because we could not descend into that gulf of night, without a previous loss of the faith and love which can only attach the soul to his communion, and enable us to “walk” with Him.

At first, the gospel was announced as “glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to men.” How in the face of this, and a thousand similar declarations, the *hired agitators* can, previously to setting out on their excursions, place themselves on their knees, and ask God to prosper them, is a strange thing to us.

Let not the incendiaries shelter themselves behind the example of Luther, Cranmer, Knox, and the Reformers. Let them not prostitute the sacred name of reform, by applying it to their cause. To make out the analogy they loftily assume, they must show us that Wesleyan Methodism is popery, as well as

that they are men "*singularly fitted for these great actions.*" Especially, let them not consider themselves the imitators of the venerable Wesley, whose only object was "to spread scriptural Christianity through the world." No: if the Reformation was a divine work—if original Methodism, in its spirit and objects, was benevolent and Christian—and, especially, if the doctrines and examples of the New Testament are a directory to all succeeding Ministers and Christians, then this agitation must stand branded as a profane and wicked mission, instigated by base and irreigious motives, and prosecuted by men otherwise inspired than by the Spirit of God. If our holy and zealous predecessors accomplished the will of God in preaching the gospel through the nation, leading sinners to Christ, establishing the fellowship of the Societies, instituting amongst them a godly discipline, and training them up for heaven;—then these men must be fighting against God in his own work. Before his tribunal the final issue must be tried, and let our readers ask, which class they would wish to be numbered amongst in that day, the BUILDERS or the DESTROYERS of the Church of God?

THE RIGHTS OF MAN; THE RIGHTS OF METHODISTS; THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—It was with a degree of consistency which is far more natural than religious, that the author of "*The Age of Reason*" should also have been the author of "*The Rights of Man*;" for the man who allows his reason to carry him beyond religious control will generally indulge its freaks on the subject of human government. We hear a great deal of "*The Rights of Man*," for this, too, is "*The Age of Reason*;" and I propose to consider our "*Rights*," under the three different aspects proposed at the head of this article.

1.—THE RIGHTS OF MAN.—The word "rights," however, conveys such a very different idea when considered abstractedly or relatively, that it is needful we should remember, that the man who claims the right to indulge his thoughts and passions, and to speak and act, disrespectful of all control, should first prove his independence of God, and then retire into some desert and exist alone; and he would then feel that he was unable either to do, or to enjoy, what is right. In order to do this he must exist in society; and society necessarily implies government—and government as necessarily implies that, what are called man's natural rights, can only be conventionally exercised. Savages are the nearest to a state of nature; but still they exist in society; and as the depravity of man leads him to violate the rights of others, and sometimes to lose sight of his own, he finds it most congenial with his enjoyments and privileges to submit to some species of government. A very feeble man may have a very just idea of his rights, but he has not the physical ability to enforce them, and to defend himself against the powerful aggressor by whom they may be assailed; and therefore he is obliged to call in the assistance of others to enable him to execute what he can perhaps very easily convince them is right. But men found *legislative* as well as *executive* societies; and unite for *counsel* as well as *defence*; for, as a great writer has said, "Truth is not the product of a single mind; it is the fruit of intercourse and collision." This of necessity implies the right of the majority to govern the minority, where, as in savage clans, all can be consulted. This species of government, however, is too imperfect for an extended society; and therefore the general sense of mankind has been in favour of submitting to a government, however it might be constituted, whose edicts should be binding on all, and be executed by those who were the authorised inspectors of their conduct, and executors of the laws. This being the only means of securing their comfort, their property, their lives, they owe obedience to these laws as the price of the protection they enjoy; and therefore, in society, whatever is *legal* is held to be *right*, and in such a state of society, a man can have no *right* which is opposed to *law*. But, as man has not the choice of being born under any form of government, he cannot be considered a voluntary member of the state to which he belongs; and if he should discover that the *laws* are opposed to the *rights* of the nation of which he is a member, he has a right to use his influence to obtain a reform. But, then, it must be such influence as does not destroy the ends for which the laws exist, and for which reform is proposed to be sought; for he has no right to encroach upon the rights of others in order to secure what he may think to be his own. The laws exist for the purpose of controlling a selfish or a passionate exertion of physical force; and attempts to set law right by physical power, and exertions which menace or destroy the lives of those who are attacked, are, in general, nothing more than the successes of a few daring spirits who have plotted in secret to take the peaceable by surprise, and to supplant the existing government by one which is more congenial to their own interests. A subversion, by any government, of the ends for which it exists, can alone justify its

subversion; and then it should not be by force of arms, but by the force of reason—or what is commonly called public opinion, legally expressed, and calmly considered. The cases are by no means so numerous as is generally supposed, in which civil war is justifiable; and even the success of such a war in the extension of liberty is not always a proof of its lawfulness; for the most infamous of men have frequently been the usurpers, and have been the most disposed to pander to the passions of the multitude, and even to redress some of the grievances under which they complained, as the price of the authority after which they themselves aspired, and an apology for their usurpation. But if the immense mischiefs of those civil commotions could now be put into the scale against their subsequent benefits—as at the bar of God they most assuredly will be—it would probably be seen that the balance is against their *patriotic* leaders. Thousands of lives are sacrificed, and millions of property alienated, under a profession of securing the rights of man; and those who have survived dare not complain—not because, in many cases, they have not abundant cause, but for the reason contained in the following epigram:—

“Treason can't prosper, some say; what's the reason?
Why, when it prospers, none dare call it treason.”

The conclusion, therefore, seems to be irresistible, that a social state being the natural state of man, conventional rights alone are natural. The world has gone the round of every possible experiment, and yet some suppose it scarcely old enough to settle the question by experience; and the history of nearly 6000 years does not abate the confidence of even those

————— “Clubs up stairs,
To which the unwashed artificer repairs;”

and that mixed form of government which unites all the excellencies of each, is, by these modest reformers, treated as a nuisance; and there are even Methodists who join in the yell of execration against existing men and measures; and that against their own ministers, in the open street, and in God's house, on the Lord's day, because they refuse to assist in the destruction of our admirable constitution; and to join in clamours for “equal rights.” “Name it not in Gath!” Oh, that they would “mark, learn, and inwardly digest” the 13th chapter of the Epistle of St. Paul to, perhaps, the Antinomian reformers in the Church at Rome.

2.—THE RIGHTS OF METHODISTS.—Methodism exists for ends which are *purely religious*; it has no direct design to secure the natural rights of men—to reform human governments—or even those which are ecclesiastical. As far as the individual is concerned it meets him: “Fleeing from the wrath to come, and desiring to be saved from his sins,”* and it points him to the Lamb of God—to the means and influences of grace—and to the duties he owes to God and man; not losing sight of “the powers that be.” As far as the community is concerned, its design is to “spread scriptural holiness through the land.” Its itinerant ministry accords with this design; this fixes its Connexional character; and both are perpetuated by Mr. Wesley's Poll Deed—the legality of which (thanks to those who designed nothing less!) has lately been established beyond the power of controversy. Those who join the Methodist Society, therefore, ought to join it under the pressure of spiritual wants—on purely religious principles; for the purpose of being instructed and assisted to “flee from the wrath to come.” Contrary to the case of those who are political subjects, however, they make a voluntary choice of the government which they will obey; or if we take birth into the account, the birth is a spiritual one; and its accomplishment by Methodistic means, accompanied by heavenly influences, is the strongest possible argument in favour of the correctness of the principles of Methodism. A system which, for nearly a century, has every where justified, and every succeeding year additionally justifies, the exclamation—“Thanks be unto God who always causeth us to triumph”—may scripturally require obedience of those whom it “saves from the wrath to come;” and its ministers may urge these apostolical reasons:—“The seals of our apostleship are ye in the Lord; if we are not apostles unto others, yet doubtless we are to you.” The choice is voluntarily made for religious purposes, and these purposes are graciously attained; and pray, what right has this man to complain of Methodism—or to seek the reform of its doctrines or its discipline? He has no right to bring in his political analogies here—and to talk of the natural rights of man—or of the conventional rights of man; of his rights as a man, or of his rights as a Briton: he has to talk, if talk he will, of his rights as a Methodist; for supposing there be any thing in Methodism which requires the sacrifice of his conventional rights, for the good of his soul, he voluntarily made the surrender when he began to seek its salvation by Methodistic agency and Methodistic

* See Rules.

means. If his rights as a Methodist are infringed, let him complain Methodistically—for complain he may, and his complaints will be heard; but let him not lift up his murderous hands against the means and instruments used and honoured, by the *parent* of his spiritual being, “lest haply he be found to fight against God.” If a man join the Methodist Society merely as a judge, for the purpose of governing—or as a legislator, for the purpose of reforming Methodism itself—or any other system by its agency—he quite mistakes his character; or if, after his conversion, he take up these ideas, and become chiefly, or solely, an ecclesiastical reformer, his mistake is equally great, with the superadded guilt of apostasy; and perhaps it is not sufficiently understood, that Antinomianism generally consists in zeal for the doctrines, and circumstantial, of whatever we may consider to be religion, as the fatal substitute for the comforts, and principles, and practices of religion. On what other principle can we account for those rapid altercations of fervid devotion and beastly howling which have recently characterized “*The Grand*” reformers of Methodism? Some of these men probably joined us as *theoretical* Dissenters, because we are *practically* such; and now they affect to be astonished at our “inconsistency,” forsooth, because we do not declare ourselves to be what they have misunderstood we are. They cannot see that our *practical* condition is the mere *imposition of circumstances* which could not be controlled; whereas, were we *voluntarily* to become *Dissenters in theory*, we should, in consistency, be bound to carry our theory out, and become *ecclesiastical reformers*. This would delight them, I know; but then, it would be a violation of one of the first principles of Methodism. It knows nothing of exclusive views of church government; it knows nothing of the “Divine right of church government; it never professed to be *the church*. It leaves the high churchman and the low dissenter, bristling at each other, “just like the fretful porcupine,” and acts as if it believed that “the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost;” and it says with the Apostle—“he that in *these things* serveth Christ, is accepted of God, and (ought to be) approved of men.”* A Methodist has no right to touch the discipline of other churches; he stands committed to let them alone;—“he has nothing to do but to save souls,” and to “spread scriptural holiness through the land;”—he is “the friend of all, and the enemy of none.” Others of these reformers have been educated among us, and have become, in theory and in practice, opposed to the very system to which they owe their religious education. It is the glory of Methodism, that it takes its officers from “the people;” but this ought to make it very careful of the training of the people; and this leads me to consider—

3.—THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN.—I have been much astonished that some of the children of some of our more respectable friends have been allowed to make as free as sometimes they have done, with the defects of the very men to whose instrumentality their fathers owed their conversion. As the Methodist Body never provided literary institutions for their ministers, they have no right to expect a literary ministry; and the consequence has been, that some of their ministers, and especially their local preachers are defective; not in sound sense; not in rich, soul-saving theology; not in the ability to set this forth, in artless, simple, attractive eloquence; so much as in literary attainments. Another drawback on their literary accuracy is—they are required to preach extempore; and God forbid that it should ever be otherwise! This, however, precludes the possibility of many of them speaking with that literary correctness which will suit the itching ears, and the fastidious tastes of many who are politely educated; and who hear a sermon on a Sunday, perhaps, under the same ideas, as they read some exciting novel, or florid periodical, on the previous day. The defects are not those of the men so much as of the system; but the men are made to suffer for it; and their juvenile hearers, like the fastidious “scorners” whom the prophet Isaiah devotes to destruction, “make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate.” God sends them ambassadors to save them from their sins; they hear them as scholars, rhetoricians, and orators! It gratifies their parents, perhaps, to hear the *acumen* of their very clever sons and daughters displayed, in turning the sermon into a literary exercise: it proves that the hundreds which have been expended in *their* education have not been thrown away; and it may afford an agreeable recreation to them and a party of their young friends, in the intervals of service. But ought not this time to be spent in religious conversation, and private and family devotion?

* Romans xiv. 17, 18. I wish this chapter were more studied than it is; the zealots perhaps might be brought to see, that the practices in dispute were those of an established church, which was even placed under the ban of heaven for its apostasy; and yet such was the Apostle's language even to the Roman Gentiles; and to the Roman *Gentile armies*, not the *Christian churches*, the avenging God left its destruction.

Does this critical hearing and conversation create that respect for God's word which it ought to meet with from his sinful creatures? Is the treasuring up of a few defects to be the subject of a witty, a critical, and an uncharitable conversation a proper employment for God's day, and God's house? Is it bringing up these children in that respect for their ministers which is conducive to their salvation through their instrumentality, and their pastoral influence, if ever they should have to exercise it on these children becoming Members of Society? It is capable of proof, Sir, that this was the juvenile conduct, as it is the present curse, of those wicked wits, who are now a pest to Methodism, and whose unblushing falsehoods and unsparing satires, are periodically dealt out, to the eternal undoing of many souls, against some of the wisest and holiest men on earth. They began by railing at individuals, they now malign the class.—Children claim the "right," however, "to pass their opinions on public men," though God has sent them, and set his seal to the divinity of their commission; and this claim is at least tacitly allowed; and many of them, subsequently, claim the right to go and join other churches; or to insult and oppose their ministers, if they continue among us; or to go—first into the world, and then——! And let parents make up their minds to one of these alternatives, if they will allow, perhaps even encourage, their children to trifle with the labours and characters of these men of God. And yet some of these triflers oppose the Theological Institution; and, judging by the use which they have made of the Methodist ministry, one is almost tempted to think the reason must be, lest it should deprive them and *their* children of a favourite Sabbath amusement. A far greater number, however, are happily of another mind; and believing that, as Methodism under God has sanctified the greatest talents, and kept even self-taught men humble and useful, it will sanctify the education intended to be conveyed, and make the next generation more abundantly so!

But the children whose "rights" are most seriously pleaded, are those who are brought up in our Sunday Schools, and almost in official connexion with us. A great number of them enter these schools as teachers, or are called out of the classes at a very early age, to be employed in teaching the younger children. But they are "teachers," and at our teacher's meetings in general, "all the teachers have a right to vote on every question that comes before the meeting;" and we be to the preacher who shall call in question their "right" so to do. In some cases their influence is even more seriously extensive, and they either constitute a part of the standing committee, or are present to vote with the committee on the most important questions. Many of them are children of no religion, none of them have much; their age prevents their having experience; but "they are teachers, and they have a right to vote;" and, in more than one instance, the sober and aged official members of our schools have been out-voted, at the beek of a political Sunday School superintendent, by these juvenile authorities! I know a case in which one of the leaders of these official children, took upon himself to exclude the travelling preachers from the "annual treat." He argued that "the preachers took no interest in their official meetings," though he knew that, owing to their onerous circuit duties, they were always otherwise engaged. "Besides, the day was a day of festivity, not of worship; and he submitted whether they ought to have any service; for, if they had, their time would in part taken up with a dry lecture. Indeed, he thought the very presence of the preachers would damp the innocent hilarity of the children, and he submitted whether they ought to be invited even to attend." He knew his children, and they liked the prospect of an unrestrained frolic; the thing was put to the vote, and the preachers were ousted. This was one of the advocates for "universal suffrage," and he knew how to train up these children in the doctrine. It does not destroy the evil to say, that this is an exception, or to admit that the more serious part of the teachers and society took the part of their preachers, and made this politician and his children eat their vote; that the preachers were invited, and the lecture delivered. Had they not been *invited*, they could have had no "*right*" there; for they had nothing *ex-officio* among them, every thing originated and ended among themselves." I need not add, that one such school as this is a nuisance, and in time might possibly become the "grand centre" of an Association, for those who, while children have been taught to vote their preachers from their counsels, and virtually depose them from their pastoral office, are not likely to do otherwise when they become men and women. Such schools as this, Sir, are the very nurseries of democratic rebellion; and where they will make one humble, teachable Christian, they will make a hundred of those politico-ecclesiastical reformers, whose very atmosphere is as fatal to the life of God in the soul, as that of the Upas of the Javanese has been reported to be to human existence. I wonder not at the misunderstandings which sometimes arise between our Sunday School authorities and their ministers, or that the *yells of children* have mingled with those that have recently insulted God and his ser-

vant's, and desecrated his sabbath and his house. I wonder more on what authority such a state of things is allowed in any one instance, to exist among us. Is there any thing in support of this childish authority in the Bible? Is there any thing in its favour in either the spirit or the rules of Wesleyan Methodism? I am just as though I saw John Wesley—peace to his manes, while I make the supposition!—asking a group of these juvenile authorities to hold up their hands, perhaps against Methodists of 50 years' standing! He would have said, "Go home, my dear children, and 'obey your parents in the Lord.' Don't mend my rules, but keep them; not for wrath, but for conscience sake." Yes, Sir, and so would St. Paul; and so ought those who are now the conservators of Wesleyan Methodism. But, as though God had appointed no authorities, had given no rules, had appointed no examples for church government, every thing is now to be settled by *political analogies*; and that by men who cannot themselves rise, or give others credit for being able to rise above political considerations on any subject; by men who invest their preachers individually, and the Conference collectively, with a merely political character; by men whose notions of "universal suffrage" make the rights of children equal to those of the grey-headed ornaments of our Societies, and superior to those of the holy and laborious men by whose exertions chiefly Methodism has become what it is! May the work of God still more abundantly appear unto his servants, and his glory unto their children!—I am, Sir, yours truly,

PHILAGATHOS.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The "ineffable hypocrisy" of the "Grand Central" has been again manifested in the published accounts of the Association meeting, at Prescot. We had supposed that the plain uncontradictory exposures we have so repeatedly made of our contemporary's mis-statements and falsehoods, would have deterred him from inserting accounts, when the veracity of his correspondent could not be depended upon. However, in this case, we find, "though we should bray him in a mortar, yet will not his foolishness depart from him."

We are obliged to our "Prescot Friend" who has favoured us with a true account of the present state and prospects of the Wesleyan Society in that town.

The *Lantern* states, in effect, that the congregation of the chapel "kindly lent" (to spread discord and confusion?) was overwhelming; while at the *old place* it amounted to about twenty persons. On the authority of our "Friend," we assert, that nearly four times that number of persons were counted in the lower part of the chapel only: and a smaller congregation than was then present has been frequently observed, when the anniversary Sunday School sermons were to be preached at St. Helens, in the immediate vicinity—as was the case on that day. Further, the friends of the Association have asserted, that "a Majority" of members had left the Old Connexion and joined the Warrenites, and that only one of the original leaders was left. We deny this; *it is not the case*. Again, in speaking of the "Long Room," which has been so recently consecrated (!) by Dr. Samuel Warren's presence and benediction, they say "that Mr. Wesley preached in it"—and what of this? Had it been the case, we think, had the spirit of that departed saint been permitted to speak to its new occupants, it would have been in an admonitory tone. However, *even this circumstance is untrue*—the place having been built about the time, or, perhaps, *since*, Mr. Wesley's death.

We are happy to find that the Wesleyan Society at Prescot is in a good state. "The spies have brought an evil report of the land." Although bereft of one or two of their old friends, the true disciples are more united to each other than ever; the various means of grace are attended with an especial unction from above; and prayer and supplication is fervently made to the God of all grace—that his spirit may be poured out in this place in a more abundant manner.

On account of the length of the first and second articles in this number, we are unable to attend to other very interesting communications.

We quite agree with "Discipulus," in his remarks on Urbane's letter in the last *Illuminator*. Our Societies, generally, would do well to attend to the advice *there given*.

Communications have been received from "Philagathos,"—"Urbane,"—from Sheffield—"J. T. D."—"A Local Preacher in the Huddersfield Circuit,"—and "W. J.," in the Warrington Circuit.

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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AN ADDRESS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST SOCIETIES,
ON THE PROPOSALS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

FRIENDS!—The members of the "Grand Central," with Dr. Warren at their head, have made a tender of their services to you, in the character of spiritual guides and governors. They have not been *urged*, or even requested, by any considerable number of persons, to undertake this burden and service; but feeling their own competency to rule the church of God, have ventured to call upon you to assist them in subverting the present government of the Connexion, in order to make way for the establishment of their own authority. You have been told by them, in a thousand different ways, that the present constitution of Methodism is unutterably bad, and that you yourselves, whether you know it or not, are groaning under a load of oppression which is intolerable to be borne. The Societies generally, it is maintained, are reduced to a state of the most abject ignorance and slavery, through the misconduct of their ministers; but that, if they will but consent to be ruled by the Association, they will soon emerge into the most marvellous knowledge and freedom.

A very high authority has said, "By their fruits ye shall know them;" and the members of the Association are quite confident that any man who carefully considers their performances, must be convinced, beyond all possible doubt, that they are born for government, and that a church must be eminently happy which submits to their dictation. It will readily occur to your recollection that one of their first exploits was, to raise the cry of "stop the supplies," and to move heaven and earth, in order to carry that project into effect. Now, if one man was ever under an obligation to another, the Methodist Connexion were bound to support the Missionaries, who had gone into distant and inhospitable lands, with a distinct understanding that they were not to be abandoned. The great grievance of which the Association complain, and which they propose to redress, is, that the preachers have broken faith with the people by infringing on the constitution of 1797. In order, as they say, to show their just abhorrence of such iniquity, they have resolved themselves,

and are endeavouring to persuade every Methodist in the kingdom, to break faith with the unoffending Missionaries by "stopping the supplies." It is true, the naked and paplable wickedness of this proposition has ensured its rejection; for our people could not reconcile it with common honesty, to pretend to correct a breach of faith in the preachers, by committing an act of robbery themselves; and they also thought, that, should the "hire" of these "labourers" be "kept back," by such a piece of "fraud," the "cry thereof" might possibly "enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabbaoth." The turn which this affair has taken is, doubtless, a disappointment to "men singularly fitted for great actions;" but the *Catechism* says, they are not to be "discouraged by difficulties," and the authors of this most dishonourable proposition, still hope to rule over both you and the Conference.

Another great performance of the same party was, to resolve, most loudly and firmly, at the very outset of their career, in Manchester, that, however persecuted, or even expelled, they would preserve their places in the church with all the tenacity of life, and never cease to be members of the Methodist Society. Their way of carrying this resolution into effect, was peculiar; for Dr. Warren, after his suspension, proceeded, in spite of all rule and reason, to distribute tickets to the members: the people eagerly received them at his hands, but would not, on any account, accept a single ticket from any of the accredited preachers; and the obvious and unavoidable consequence was, that, in spite of the wish felt by their ministers to retain many of them, in the space of three months, every man had *excluded himself* from the Society. Common people, perhaps, will say that this was a piece of great simplicity; but we are not going to try them by ordinary rules, as the *Catechism* says they are "singularly fitted for great actions."

The members of the Association connected with the Leeds-street chapel, in Liverpool, likewise declared most stoutly, that there should be no division there, for they were all members and officers of the Methodist Society, and such they would remain, in spite of the superintendent, and even of the Conference itself. In order to make good these declarations, according to the best of their judgment, they proceeded to expel the superintendent from the chair of the leaders' meeting; the following week, they left the vestry in a body, and held their meeting elsewhere; then, finally, withdrew from the chapel, and have now as much to do with Wesleyan Methodism as any of the other religious denominations in that town. It was certainly necessary that a plausible covering should be provided for such a retreat as this, and accordingly the *Catechism* was published, apprizing us, that these men promised so much, and did so little—swaggered so loudly, and ran away so swiftly—because they were not common people, but "singularly fitted for great actions," and born to rule the Methodist Connexion.

Another exploit performed by these men was Dr. Warren's famous law suit. That is to be considered as the act of the Association, inas-

much as it was the fruit of their united knowledge and sagacity. It was known indeed to the great body of the preachers, that the whole case of the plaintiff rested upon a paltry legal quibble, which every lawyer must infallibly detect. However, being headed by a *Doctor of Laws*, and very desirous to give a proof of their abilities to govern Methodism—to law they went, and, as a matter of course—lost their cause! Still, confident that such people as themselves could not be mistaken, they said the mistake was with Sir Lancelot Shadwell, and determined to appeal from him to the Lord Chancellor. They did so, and accordingly lost their cause a second time, but under still more humiliating and confounding circumstances: but the worst was, that these men, “singularly fitted for great actions,” were obliged to end this law suit like common people—by paying the expenses! It is well known that this trial was *intended* to upset Methodism as it is, by destroying the power of the Conference; but, *in fact*, it has rendered both as fixed and permanent as the laws of England can make them. When men thus defeat their own intentions—do good against their will, and build up what they had resolved to pull down—it must be admitted, that they are not “fitted,” either for government or any thing else, in the ordinary way, but must be “*singularly* fitted for great actions.”

Another achievement of the “Grand Central” was the getting up of the meeting of delegates, recently held in Sheffield. This was pompously proposed in the *Lantern* during the early part of the year, and powerfully seconded in the *Advocate*. After being long the subject of much flourish and parade, it was at length preceded by the preparatory meeting, held in Manchester, which was said to be most numerous and respectably attended—a perfect Hercules in its cradle, which, when of age, and full grown, at Sheffield, would crush the Conference with a vengeance, and revolutionize the Connexion. The delegates assembled in due time and form, and what have they done? They *promised* to beard the Conference on its own floor, and to wring from its reluctant hand such concessions as they had agreed to demand. What have they *performed*? They debated several days, imitating O’Connell, to the best of their ability—sent two or three notes to the Conference, and received as many answers in return; in one of which they were told, very plainly, what the Conference thought of them and their projects. The effect of this communication upon the delegates, we must leave to the conjectures of our readers. The notorious fact is, that they have redressed no grievance—they extracted no concession—they never even met the Conference at all! It is true, they collected a miscellaneous mob, in one of the Kilhamite chapels—erected that mob into a court of justice, and summoned several preachers to come and take their trials before this court. The poor court, however, was treated with utter contempt, for nobody paid any regard to its orders. So after blustering, and abusing the whole body of the preachers, during two successive evenings, having made themselves sufficiently ridiculous, they departed every man to his own house. Somebody has said—

“The king of France, with twenty thousand men,
Marched up the hill, and then marched down again.”

If so, then it would appear that French soldiers, as well as English delegates, may be "singularly fitted for great actions," without performing any.

Yet, it must be allowed, there was one good thing which the delegates did at Sheffield; which was, to start a subscription in favour of the *Advocate*. For, notwithstanding the prodigious profits resulting from the great sale of that paper, as agitators are not easily satisfied, so the smallest sums, it appears, in the way of gratuity, are not unacceptable. The friends of that journal in the country have placed some confidence in the truths of its statements, but the initiated, in London, appear to entertain a different opinion. A few months ago, the same *Advocate* stated that Mr. Eckett, of the Queen-street circuit, attended the Manchester meeting, and delivered a speech there. In the report of a trial which appeared a few weeks since, we find this same Mr. Eckett maintaining that such a statement was "no evidence" of his being there in reality; and a large meeting of Methodist officers generally acquiesced in this opinion, and acted accordingly. Now, we are quite sure, that Mr. Eckett is no enemy to the *Advocate*, or to the Association, for he has long been very wishful both to mend our discipline, and to get something from the Chapel Fund; and the members of the meeting, who concurred in his opinion, were generally actuated by the same feeling. It may be some little comfort to the Methodist preachers to know, that although the same paper has said many things about them, as well as about Mr. Eckett, yet in the judgment even of its friends, this is "no evidence" that such things are true, and, therefore, no wise man will believe them, without further confirmation. All this, at the same time, goes to prove the doctrine of the *Catechism*; because, if some men have said things so often, and in such a way, that their saying them is "no evidence" that they are true, they must be "singularly fitted for great actions" in their own line.

The last thing we shall request you to notice, respecting the Association, is, its recent resolution to change its name. The title, "Grand Central," we are told, is to be dropped, and that of Wesleyan reformers to be taken up in its place. The philosophy of the custom of changing names is to be found in Locke's doctrine of the association of ideas.—When a man is so circumstanced that his name cannot be heard without reminding people of certain dishonourable transactions in which he has been engaged, he deems it expedient to change it. Now the name of "Grand Central" cannot be pronounced without leading people to think of many acts of egregious folly—of a chapel which has been sold, at Dudley, in a way which may pass in the dark, but which will hardly bear the light—of the stolen book and money, so often mentioned in this work, with other things, equally discreditable; and, therefore, the party do wisely in dropping it as soon as possible. This was accordingly attempted at Sheffield; but the thing was done so clumsily that the Conference detected and exposed the paltry trick. But as the *Catechism* says, that men "fitted for great actions" are not "discouraged by difficulties," they will most probably try again, and hope to succeed better with more ignorant and credulous people.

And now, Christian friends, if you are convinced, by a careful perusal of these statements, that these men are born to rule the Methodist Connexion, that is more than can be said of the men themselves. They have tacitly admitted that the demonstration of the point is not yet complete. Hence they tell us that, in the year 1836, they will do something worthy of themselves—make the Conference feel their power, and rise to

their proper station. In the mean time, they are resolved to agitate; which means, that, with such credentials as they can produce, they will offer themselves to the Societies, as their future governors—invite them to quarrel with their preachers—to submit to the Association, under a new name, and to put their trust under the shadow of its wing.

THE ROCHDALE CASE.

The evidence of some truths, though extremely clear, is often so painful as to cause long hesitation in the avowal. This has been the case with regard to ourselves, and certain feelings produced in us, respecting the *moral obliquity* of the proceedings of the Wesleyan reformers. Indeed, we have lived long enough in the world to be convinced, that, in both church and state, the man who begins the occupation of reformer and demagogue, as a profession, does so, because he is bankrupt in character or fortune, and often both. But though this conviction rested on our minds as a general truth, we were unwilling to admit its applicability to the parties now agitating the Wesleyan Connexion. A hope has been lingering in our minds—growing fainter and fainter, it is true, by the progress of events, but there it has been—that the disturbances and riot going on amongst us, did not rest in any foul, feculant state of moral feeling, on the part of the radical faction, but arose out of the excitements of passion, and would soon work off, as reason and religion regained their right position.

It is with extreme grief we record our conviction, that *now* the evil lies deeper than a heated and frenzied brain. From unfaithfulness, disingenuousness, slander, and falsehood, the parties are plunging themselves headlong into absolute *fraud* and *dishonesty*. This is sufficiently painful in itself; but ten-fold more so, when we recollect that this state is symptomatic of other evils. No man can act dishonourably towards his fellow men, till every noble sentiment is buried in his bosom, and a nest of mean and despicable reptiles have been generated in its place; and no man can be guilty of fraud and dishonesty, till the law of truth and holiness is thrown beneath his feet, and trampled upon as a common thing. In substantiating our charge, we pass by many minor offences, and fix on the attempts made to wrest the chapels, in several places, from the Connexion. Before proceeding to our proof, we premise two or three general remarks.

The first is, that the office of Trustee is only *administrative*. The provisions of the Deeds, fix in law, the duties and rights of Trustees; and all they can claim is, the power to hold the property for the purposes specified. Every person is acquainted with this fact when he takes the office, and also, that his functions are limited to the duty of administering the affairs of the chapel, according to the provisions of the Deed. Whim, change of opinion, private judgment, and independent action, are out of the question; and every man is bound, in law, faithfully to adhere to the conditions of the trust he has taken upon himself.

Another consideration is, that the property invested in chapels, is not the property of the Trustees, in any sense of the word; but is supplied by public benevolence, with the understanding, that it shall be appropriated to specific purposes. A chapel has lately been erected in Leeds, at a cost of eight thousand pounds. No doubt, the generous Trustees contributed their individual share; and the rest of the money, to the amount of their subscriptions and collections, was given by the public, with the clear understanding that it was to support a Wesleyan Methodist chapel. This being the express and well-understood engagement by all parties, it follows, that the Trustees have no legal or moral right to alienate this property from the purposes for which it is given.

Finally, in all Wesleyan chapels, the Conference is a party. The power to appoint ministers, in regular succession, is part of the compact. With the ministers, so appointed, rests the privilege of administering the word of God, and the ordinances of religion, according to certain covenants provided for in the deed. All these very obvious principles have been grossly violated in the case of Dudley; and now, we grieve to say, attempted at Rochdale.

A right has been assumed, in these places, to *legislate*; and in that capacity, independently to dispose of that which is only held in trust. In most of the Chapel Deeds, as the Conference is an interested party, their representative, the superintendent, has always the right to be present at meetings of business. However, it seems, in some recent cases, the Trustees virtually expelled the superintendent, by purposely holding meetings in his absence, and then proceeding to legislate and dispose of their trust estate, not only without his concurrence, but in express violation of the law of the case. How stands this part of the question with honourable feeling, and upright and honest dealing?—Let us try it in another instance. Suppose some rural village had, by great exertions, raised sufficient funds for the erection of a school for the instruction of the children of the parish, on the principles of the national faith; and, to secure this point, were to select a dozen of their most reputable neighbours, as Trustees of the institution. In order to carry the design fully into effect, it is provided, that the catechisms of the church shall be used—her liturgy adopted—the parish minister attend all meetings of the Trustees—and if any of these conditions be neglected or violated, the proceeding shall be null and void, or be considered as an offence against the law. But a popish agitator, suppose O'Connell, in one of his tours through the nation, pays them a visit—shakes their confidence in the protestant faith—and, thinking the faithful parish minister might perchance stand in their way, the Trustees of the school secretly meet, and resolve that it shall be turned into a popish agitation room—that the formularies of protestantism shall be destroyed—the poor parson dismissed from his office—and the children either sent home about their business, or converted into little papists, and handed over to the keeping of the priest; who does not see that all this would be a gross and palpable fraud? Where is the difference betwixt this, and the Rochdale case? Is it a question now, whether the Association is anti-methodistic? Is it doubted, whether the designs and purposes of the agitators are intended to injure, and, indeed, totally to destroy and overthrow the Wesleyan Connexion? Surely, at this stage of their proceedings, no men of sound mind can doubt the drift and scope of the projected revolution now going on. Yet, in the face of a thousand facts, in proof of the hostile designs of the agitators, the Rochdale Trustees attempt to establish the domination of the Association on the trust premises of which they are the guardians. They do this first, by excluding Mr. Sumner from their meeting. Had they any right to act thus? We have not seen the Deed, but we presume it made provision for his attendance; and on this presumption we write. This conduct was not only unfair and discourteous, but it was a palpable and positive fraud; inasmuch, as it went to deprive one of the parties of a right, secured to him by law, and a right of the most valuable, serious, and important kind. Suppose the transaction had been the other way, and Mr. Sumner had been instructed by the Conference to act independently of the Trustees—to foist upon them some new doctrine—introduce the liturgy—and take upon himself the entire management of the trust estate, would they not instantly cry out against the injustice and tyranny of his conduct, consider their just rights invaded, and seek redress in a court of law? Most assuredly they would do so, and incur the charge of despicable meanness and folly, if they did not so act.

But they not only commit a fraud, by the exclusion of the Superintendent from his lawful place in the meetings, but in his absence, they assume the rights of independent legislation, and resolve that the premises shall be appropriated to purposes not at all provided for in the settlement of the building. We have full proof of this in the fact, that the Vice-Chancellor issued his injunction to restrain them from their purpose. Here, then, we have another breach of trust, and consequent injustice. Are these gentlemen persons of competent judgment and sagacity to manage their own private affairs, and understand the nature of the compacts they enter into in the course of their dealings in trade and commerce? We believe they are; they have the reputation of being somewhat sagacious, shrewd, and strong-minded men. Did they possess and peruse the Chapel Deed? We are assured they did. Then, they either knew or did not know, that in their assumed authority in turning the chapel into an arena of strife and agitation, they were transgressing the provisions of their trust. Let them take which alternative they like best. If they plead ignorance, we are ready to admit their plea; but then it shows, that politico-religious fanaticism, party spirit, and prejudice, have blinded their minds. In their own personal affairs, they can act discreetly, comprehend the nature of their engagements and obligations; but, as Methodist Trustees, they are incapable of understanding the plainest principles of justice. But we believe they will not choose this position for themselves. They will tell us that they knew what they were about, and were acquainted with the extent of their powers, and the tendency of all their proceedings. They may have the benefit of this plea if they wish it, and, on its admission, we tell them, they have assumed powers which they *knew*

did not belong to them, for the purpose of fraudulently alienating the chapel to purposes destructive of the interests of Methodism—whch interests, as men of honour and integrity, they were bound to maintain. The principles of justice are immutable; and what such a transaction as this would be considered in any other case, it unquestionably is in this. We believe these gentlemen belong to the *liberal* school—they hate tyranny—they are in raptures about liberty. Notwithstanding this, they arbitrarily deprive a man of his rights; and, by one most *liberal* resolution, disfranchise their poor Superintendent, and the parties he represents. They detest and abhor the breach of rule and law in the Conference, and publish to the world that they are determined not to allow what they deem to be a new interpretation of the Rules of Methodism, to be administered amongst them; but they have no hesitation to break the covenants into which they themselves had entered, and solemnly ratified and sealed—a transaction tantamount to an oath. They declaim against chicanery, jesuitism, and double-dealing in their preachers; whilst they themselves are guilty of as clear and palpable a fraud as can be well conceived.

Besides the unjust ejection of their Superintendent from his place in their meetings, and thus injuring the rights they were bound to respect, they next proceed to pass a resolution, that the chapel they held in trust for Wesleyan Methodist interests, shall be employed for the purpose of their overthrow and destruction. To further this object, an invitation is addressed to the agitators, a platform is erected, and a public meeting convened. The creed of these parties is before the world, and a thousand overt acts of aggression on the peace, polity, and prosperity of Methodism, stand out, practically to illustrate its nature. The trustees resolve that they shall have the opportunity of essaying their skill in the art of devastation and ruin at Rochdale, and not merely that they shall enjoy their accustomed facilities in the enterprise, in some Kilhamite or Dissenting place, but that they shall have free ingress into the chapel which was built by the money of Methodists, set apart to perpetuate their worship, and secured to them by law. No doubt, the revolutionary party would feel much obliged for the favour shown them. Trustees have usually treated them in so very different a manner, that it must have elated the mountebank orators to the skies, to think of being allowed to perform their pranks in so elegant and spacious a place. It must have been put down by anticipation in the calandar of reform as a grand gala day. Magistrates with the king's commission, and the insignia of their office—constables and policemen marshalled, staff in hand—scouts and patrols planted here and there, to reconnoitre and communicate by telegraph any news from the streets or hills. Something like the *battle of the barricades*, and the *three glorious days*, appear to have been calculated upon. And who was the enemy against whom all this ammunition is collected, and these precautions taken? Who will believe it when we say, the poor, quiet, peaceful, praying Methodists! No; there would have been no fisty-cuff battle. The heroes of Rochdale need not have gone to this cost of warlike genius, skill, and preparation, to put to flight poor brother Sumner and his legion. They, good souls, know nothing about war, except against “the world, the flesh, and the devil.” “The weapons of their warfare are not carnal.” It does, indeed, appear from this affair, that the dissentients have wrought themselves up into fighting trim; like Don Quixote, they have long been contending with wind-mills; they imagined that, at Rochdale, they had come in sight of an enemy of their own species—when, lo and behold, it turned out to be a cloud on a mountain, instead of an army of fighting men. No; the Wesleyan Methodists have but to trust in God and the justice of their cause; and, whatever may be the truth in other cases, they are convinced that a religion which must be maintained by battle is not worth maintaining at all. They had only to appeal to the tribunals of justice; and the injunction of his Honour the Vice-Chancellor, as by magic, dispersed the host of heroes then and there assembled to fight the battles of agitation. Magistrates, constables, scouts, orators, and trustees, by this single fiat are at once discomfited; and, with faces elongated, retire from the place which rests securely on the palladium of British justice, to pour forth their vapid fury in quarters more congenial with their low and grovelling objects.

Yet, it is not so much with the ridiculous, as the venal, that we have to do in this case. The Rochdale trustees know as well as we, that the objects of the Association are diametrically opposed to Methodism, whilst they themselves are bound to maintain its integrity. Then, on what principle, except a dishonest betrayal of their duties, could they introduce the agitators into the precincts of the temple of which they were the guardians, for the well-known and avowed purpose of destroying the interests of Methodism. Will these gentlemen have the kindness to tell us, if the Association gained any of the numerous points they have at different times broached, and if they succeeded in palming any one of their chimerical constitutions on the Connexion, that the *thing* they

established would be Wesleyan Methodism? It would be no more the system left us by our great founder, than American republicanism, put in the place of the three estates of these realms, would be the British Constitution. If, in case of war with that country, some *jacobin* garrison should betray their trust to the enemy, for the purpose of establishing republicanism in the place of English institutions, they would just do in a national point of view, that which these gentlemen have done in Methodism. A war is raging between the old Wesleyan constitutionalists, and an army of spiritual republicans, collected not merely from amongst ourselves, but from all other quarters, and with whatever circumlocution they please to deceive the world—this is the true question at issue. It answers their purpose to accuse the Conference and loyal friends of Methodism with tyranny, breach of rules, and all kinds of crimes and misdemeanours; whereas, if the parties would be honest, they would abandon these regions of slander and falsehood, and take their ground on the broad and manly principle we have adverted to. We abhor all trick and cant. If we are wrong, let that be demonstrated; and if religious republicanism is scriptural, let that theory be advocated and established. We have often challenged our opponents to the proof of this proposition, but in vain. It is obvious that the Rochdale Trustees hold this sentiment, and sympathise with the ideas of the persons maintaining it. They may do so; but they have no right to betray the citadel entrusted to their care into the enemy's hands. They have attempted to do this, and as certainly as all honest men and true patriots would brand with infamy the traitorous commander who should open the gates of his castle, and admit the enemy of his country; so certainly, will honest men brand them with a traitorous betrayal of true and constitutional Methodism to factions, which are endeavouring to put in its place a system of low democracy.

Although we mourn over sin and anarchy wherever they may be found, yet we cannot but rejoice that this Rochdale case has been brought to an issue, and under the guidance of leaders who are evidently well fitted to the task. In the Christian church there are worse things than separations. To say nothing of sin, if a part of the Members of Society become incurably hostile to the constitution of Methodism, their continuance in the Connexion can only be as a dead weight to its operations; and, consequently, their withdrawal, though leaving a chasm for the time, must be for its benefit in the end. A state of things has long existed at Rochdale which any one might easily foresee, must at some time break itself up. It was only necessary for the spark to be put to the train, and ignition must take place. Now that the trial, long foreseen, has approached, we are thankful that men have been placed there who have proved themselves fully able to meet it. Nothing could be more judiciously, ably, and skilfully managed than the measures taken by the preachers and their legal advisers on this occasion. As in the Manchester case, right has gained the victory; and British justice has interposed to protect the violated and outraged privileges of innocent parties. But the authority of the Vice-Chancellor, must have the effect of intimidating any other parties who may be deluded enough to entertain the design of imitating their brethren at Rochdale.

We indeed expect that "railing accusations" will, in abundance, be brought against our brethren and ourselves, on account of this appeal to the law for protection. At his late performance in the Music Hall, Mr. Gordon denounced the inconsistency of the Conference for condemning the appeal of Dr. Warren to a court of justice, and then placing the chapels of Dudley under the same protection. As if there was no difference betwixt appealing to Chancery on a case of ecclesiastical discipline, and the alienation of property. It would, no doubt, suit this gentleman admirably, to put the law in abeyance, whilst he and his party committed an absolute robbery, and appropriated property, to the amount of many thousand pounds, to their own use. No, let them at least be at the trouble and cost of rearing their own system and places of worship, as the Wesleyan body has done; and not steal those of others. The same outcry will be raised respecting this new case; and the wicked preachers will be stigmatized as under the influence of an indomitable and incurable love of power, when they dare to assert and maintain their rights, and the integrity of Methodism. There is an authority, which declares, that "*the law is made for the lawless*;" and, if parties amongst us prove themselves so devoid of honour, integrity, and religion, as to outrage the plainest principles of justice, it is only proper to place them under its controul. Those who refuse to govern *themselves* on the precepts of religion, and the well understood rules of conventional law, must be governed by the application of its power to their actions and conduct.

THE SPIRITUAL STATE OF THE WESLEYAN CONNEXION.

Notwithstanding the irony and sarcasm of John Gordon, we cannot rid ourselves of the old-fashioned habit of taking divine providence and grace into our reflections on the progress of events in the world, and especially the church. Indeed we are quite willing to allow that the contentions and divisions now going on in the Connexion, ought to be regarded as chastenings from the Lord, and to induce a state of deep humility, searchings of heart, confessions of sin, and increased devotedness to the quiet and holy interests of true religion. In accordance with these sentiments, every true friend of Methodism must be anxious to ascertain, on good evidence, whether a blessing still rests on the Connexion or not. Judging of the state of things, by one class of publications, a stranger would be led to conclude that the Body was ready to fall to pieces by the process of moral decomposition; that all signs of vitality had departed, and a state of noxious putridity only appeared to offend the senses of by-standers. We are, however, thankful to perceive signs of life and health; and, although the depletions which have taken place, in various societies, have tended to reduce the corpulency of the Body, we believe its pulse is now regular, natural, and vigorous.

We are thankful to know, on good evidence, that in the most disturbed districts—such as Manchester and Liverpool, there are tokens of good. In the former town, the congregations are beginning to increase, and accessions are being made to the Society; and, in the latter, numerous conversions have taken place at the different meetings. These are encouraging indications. While we have to mourn over the desolations of Zion, and to grieve on account of the loss of so large a number of persons, once living in happy fellowship with the Societies, it is consoling to perceive any proofs of the divine presence, and of the approach of brighter and better days. We trust that these will soon appear. Only let all classes of persons be true to their principles and duties—cherish a spirit of fervent prayer—diligently attend the ordinances—recommend religion by their temper and conversation—train their families in the fear of God, and use their utmost exertions to bring sinners to the Saviour, and the work of God will prosper and revive. In existing circumstances, two things are especially necessary—dependence on God, and brotherly affection and union. It would be useful for us to keep the spiritual and religious interests of Methodism constantly in view, and then fully and simply to intrust the matter to God. His protection afforded, and his Spirit poured out, the ark will not only be safe, but the work prosper. Our disputes and divisions began by having the attention diverted from the essential and spiritual glories of the gospel, to subjects of doubtful disputation on church polity; and a return of prosperity must begin at the same point, only in the reverse order. The minor questions must be lost sight of as much as possible; and the higher duties of extending the truth, of supporting the spiritual objects of the gospel, and bringing sinners to God, must be sought. This, diligently attended to, the wilderness will soon blossom as the garden of the Lord.

We have other unequivocal proofs of progress. The erection of chapels, successful anniversaries, and the progress of Christian education, are signs of, at least, an *existing*, if not a *growing* and triumphant, work of God. We are quite sure, that if the Association had opened a tabernacle, established its principles in any new place, and succeeded in gaining a numerous attendance and good collections, they would consider these as signs of success. Why may we not have the same indulgence? It is only necessary to consult the *Watchman* or the *Magazine*, to find that new chapels are springing up in various parts of the Connexion, old ones are being enlarged, the anniversaries numerously attended and well supported, and Sunday and other schools piously patronised and encouraged. It is not for the sake of recording these facts that we now advert to them, but to draw one consolatory inference—that, in the midst of the confusion of the times, the real work of God is in progress. It is known to those who are read in the history of the church, that external difficulties and spiritual triumphs have often, and, indeed, generally, co-existed. If God has greater work for the Wesleyan Body to accomplish for his glory, he will make the present trials of the Connexion

conducive to the increase of its wisdom, purity, stability, and strength. We look out for indications, and anxiously wait to see whether the roots of the tree are so rotten as to be unable to steady the trunk in the storm, or whether they are striking deeper and deeper in the soil, and sending out a more blooming foliage, and ripe and beautiful fruit. At present, we see nothing to alarm, but many things to encourage us. The facts now adverted to, show that our people have not lost heart; their courage and confidence are not gone; and, with renewed diligence and devotedness, they are giving themselves to promote the work of God. This is valuable on its own account, but more so as a symptom of trust in God, and the cause they have espoused. Men would not be found in large numbers to lend their influence, their experience, their counsels, and their property, if they had not a persuasion of its being a divine work. The loss of confidence would lead to a loss of courage, and we should see them in consternation, fleeing in every direction, and seeking shelter from the storm by a thousand cowardly expedients. But more than this, we hail the zealous support of the institutions of Methodism as a proof of the continued presence and blessing of God. If some persons choose to attribute the stability and growth of religion to accident and chance, they are welcome to their opinion; but, with St. Paul, we are obliged to believe that "the increase is of God."

But we find especial marks of prosperity and success in the missionary department. As this part of the work was specially assailed, and the corruption was thought to lie at the very core of this noble institution, it is most grateful to witness a state of prosperity almost unexampled in the annals of the church. We subjoin the following extract from a letter of Mr. Tucker, Missionary, in the Friendly Islands, and published in the last Notices:—

"Two persons were blessed with pardon on Sunday, the 3d of August; but on Saturday, the 9th, the work of God proceeded in a most glorious and wonderful manner. We met the Leaders in the afternoon, and had a kind of class and prayer meeting: the Lord was present of a truth; many were so deeply wrought upon by the Holy Spirit that they wept aloud, and were unable to express their feelings. We adjourned to the chapel. There were from four to five hundred persons present. As soon as the service began, the windows of heaven were opened, and the Spirit was poured out from on high. Men, women, and children were weeping on every side, and praying for mercy in an agony of soul. I never saw or heard of any thing to equal it; the arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in their souls; their cries were piercing; some were weeping aloud, some were smiting on their breasts like the publican, and breathing forth the sinners only plea: "God be merciful to me a sinner." We had plenty of work in going about among the penitents, pointing them to "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world," and praying with and for them. God was present to heal as well as to wound; many were soon enabled to lay hold by faith on Jesus as their Saviour, and found redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of all their sins. Our opinion is, that not less than one hundred souls experienced the salvation of God that evening. Many remained on their knees throughout the meeting, and it was with difficulty that we persuaded them to separate when it became dark, though we promised to assemble again at daylight in the morning. Many others went home with a heavy heart; they were deeply wounded by the Spirit of conviction, and refused to give sleep to their eyes or slumber to their eyelids; but wrestled, Jacob-like, with the Angel of the Covenant until the day dawned; and, blessed be God! many found him to the joy of their souls. In the morning we repaired to the house of prayer as soon as it was light. Some hundreds were obliged to remain in the chapel-yard. The Lord made the place of his feet glorious: the stout-hearted began to tremble; there was a mighty shaking among the dry bones. As soon as the service began, the cries of the people began; they were melted into tears on every hand, and many of them cried aloud, by reason of the disquietude of their souls. O what a solemn, but joyful sight, to behold! One thousand or more individuals bowed before the Lord, weeping at the feet of Jesus, and praying in an agony of soul! I never saw such distress; never heard such cries for mercy, or such confession of sin before; these things were universal, from the greatest Chiefs in the land to the meanest individuals; and of both sexes, old and young. The Lord heard the sighing of the prisoners; he bound up many a broken-hearted sinner in that meeting, and proclaimed liberty to many a captive. We were filled with wonder and gratitude, and lost in praise, on witnessing the Lord making bare his arm so gloriously in the sight of the Heathen. We met again about nine o'clock, and had a similar meeting; hundreds wept aloud, and many trembled from head to foot, as though they were about to be tried at the bar of God. We were engaged nearly the whole day in this blessed work. I attended five services, and witnessed hundreds of precious souls made happy by a sense of the Saviour's love on that day and the preceding evening. There never was such a Sabbath in Haabai before; it was indeed one of the days of the Son of Man. Many will remember it with pleasure throughout eternity, as the day of their adoption into the heavenly family. During the following week the concern of the people was so great, that they laid aside their work. We had service twice every day but one; the chapel was always full. It was a week of Sabbaths, and of much prayer and praise. Not a day or a night passed but several were disburdened of their load of guilt and fear, by believing on Jesus with their hearts unto righteousness. This blessed work was not confined to this island (Lifuka), but spread like fire among stubble, until it had extended over the whole group: before a week had rolled round, every island had caught the flame; the people were earnestly seeking the Lord, or rejoicing because they had found him. Many were greatly surprised and frightened at first; some ran away from the chapel, under the idea that a fearful disease had broken out here (contagious, of course,) and that the people were dying in great numbers. The Lord cut short his work in righteousness in a most wonderful manner. We have not yet received an account from all the islands of the number who have obtained peace with God during this revival; but, from the number

already brought in by the Leaders, we believe that upward of two thousands were truly converted to God in the course of a fortnight. May the Lord preserve them even unto the end! After reading this, you will gladly unite with me in saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things; and blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen, and amen."

"The most blessed effects have resulted from this work. The teachers are of one heart and soul; the people love as brethren: many of the most stout-hearted have fallen subdued before the cross of Christ. The polygamists have cast away their sins, and are truly penitent before God. On many of the islands every individual is meeting in class. We have service every evening: the chapel is well filled. The distress of the people has subsided; for most of them are blessed with sacred peace."

Thus it appears, that God is reviving and extending his work, in the midst of the evils of the times. There is an under current of divine and heavenly influence flowing through the Connexion, and our hope is, that—as in nature—when the atmosphere has been cleared by the storm, all things appear in increased freshness and beauty—so in the church, when the tempest is stilled, the fertility of summer will appear, and God be glorified in the abundance of spiritual blessings conferred by his grace.

THE SEPTEMBER QUARTERLY MEETINGS.

After a year of unexampled agitation and trial, and the determination of the Conference to enter into no compromise with the Association, as well as on account of the explanations and regulations entered into, the friends of Methodism naturally looked forward to the September Quarterly Meetings with some anxiety. Those meetings are now over, and it is peculiarly satisfactory, that, while the principal circuits have expressed their entire and hearty concurrence in the views and legislation of the Conference; only one, has expressed a negative opinion. This fact is illustrative of many very important principles.

1.—It demonstrates the entire confidence of the great body of the officers and members of the Connexion, in the constitution and integrity, of the Conference itself. Incessant efforts had been employed, in every way, during the year, to shake the reliance of the people in that body. It had been represented as anti-christian and popish; as resting on no scriptural title; as having exceeded and transgressed the power confided to it by the Poll Deed; as being entirely irresponsible; as "lording it over God's heritage" in a most tyrannical manner; as being venal and corrupt in character; as giving its willing acquiescence to the designs of a dominant faction; and as altogether opposed to the genius of English law and personal freedom. Notwithstanding all this—and they are topics calculated to make a deep impression on the sensitive minds of British Christians—the effect has been extremely slight; and it is evident, that undiminished confidence is still exercised in the great body of preachers. Indeed, the people in general have the sense to perceive that the Conference can have no interest in indulging in the vagaries of a mal-administration; but, on the other hand, have a personal advantage in the maintainance of such a state of things as shall comport with truth, on the one hand, and produce satisfaction and comfort, on the other. They have, indeed, clearly seen that the question at issue was not, whether, in certain given cases, the preachers had been guilty of error, or of malversation, but whether the pastoral government of the Societies should pass from them into the hands of the demagogues of the Connexion? The transactions of the Quarterly Meetings are the reply to that question, and inform all parties concerned, that they prefer the present *regime* to the one tendered to their acceptance.

2.—The general satisfaction of the Connexion with the legislation itself is proved, by these transactions. We never ranked amongst those who are represented by the agitators as holding that the Wesleyan system is infallible; and, consequently, incapable of improvement; and in this, we believe, we express the sentiments of the great body of preachers, and members too. But, whilst we make this statement, we hold,

and have always held, that, in its great and capital *principles* and *land marks*, it is scriptural and useful both. The changes proposed by the Association are organic and fundamental. Against this, the Conference took its stand; and their legislation rested on the avowed principle of preserving the foundations of the Connexion entire, and amplifying the compartments of the building, according to the apparent necessity of the case. It is clear enough, that a change of circumstances, brought about by the lapse of ages, the progress of events, and the growth of the Body, may call for an enlargement of the social system, and the application of the provisions of the constitution to new circumstances. This is not the scheme of the revolutionists—but destruction. They propose that the foundations of the edifice shall be removed, as well as the external fabric. Next to the infinite hazard of such an experiment, it also rests on the assumption that we have hitherto been wrong in our *principles*. That this was the case with Mr. Wesley himself, and that the great Methodist machine has been wrought on a false principle. Now, the Conference was not prepared to say, in effect, that Wesley, Benson, Clarke, and all the noble spirits of ancient days, misunderstood the *very fundamentals* of Christian polity, and that it was left to John Gordon, David Rowland, and Dr. Warren only, to dig deep enough into the mines of truth to find a solid foundation. We are truly thankful to believe, and know, that our beloved friends in general fully acquiesce in this feeling, and have shown that they approve of the ground taken, and also of the improvements themselves. As usual, all that was done, has been attributed by the agitators, to a sordid motive; and also, to a wish to rivet the chains of despotism more tightly on the people. In the opinion of these gentlemen, Methodist preachers can have neither understanding, conscience, nor benevolence. All flows from a corrupt fountain, and is consequently tainted. It must be mortifying to them to perceive that the great body of officers and people in every part of the nation, repudiate this feeling, and either openly or tacitly receive the regulations as real improvements, calculated to lead to content and satisfaction on the points needing attention and correction.

3.—A testimony is also borne by the satisfaction of the Quarterly Meetings, to the general excellency of our discipline. It is the height of folly to suppose that so large a body of people, as compose the Wesleyan Societies, would quietly submit to a system which they felt to be galling and oppressive. Indeed, it is a perfect insult on their common sense, to be told that they are bowing their necks beneath a galling yoke of spiritual despotism. Have they not sense enough to know what they enjoy and what they suffer? Are they such idiots as to exist in a prison-house, to be enclosed by dungeon walls, and made secure in darkness, by bars and bolts, and yet be totally ignorant of the fact? Is it necessary that the torch of discord and agitation should be carried by the hand of the incendiary, to throw its lurid gleam on their darkness? The people have replied for themselves to these interrogatories, and proved, beyond question, that they are not conscious of any such misery and bondage, as the dreams of the anarchists lead them to believe, that they themselves endure, and, by their vociferations, would teach the whole Methodist community to imagine that they also suffer. Surely a large body of people would never live in a state of degrading misery if they could avoid it. All our people have the means of escape, and yet the vast majority choose to remain; and now, on the trial, *in effect*, express their approval of the whole Wesleyan economy.

4.—The loyal devotedness of the Quarterly Meetings and of the Connexion, shows very clearly that the great majority of the people have no sympathy with the agitation. The few disturbances which have taken place since August, is no proof to the contrary. It was well enough known, at that period, and, indeed, long before, that, at these several places, there must be a disruption. When it is discovered that latent fires are pent up beneath the earth, it requires no great sagacity to foresee that there must be a volcanic irruption. Who, that knew any thing of the state of things at Whitehaven and Rochdale, could entertain any doubt whether there would be a separation? But the opening of the crater at these places, and the issuing of smoke, cinders, *fire*, and lava, around, is no more evidence that the entire Wesleyan Body is on fire, than the flames of Vesuvius or Etna is proof that the whole interior of the globe is *fire*, and will one day break out and consume the world. No; if the *material* of the body had been combustible, it would have ignited long ago. We have an undoubted right to assume, that the great community composing the Societies, have no feeling in common with the agitators. Have they responded to the cuckoo-note to “stop the supplies?”

Let the contributions to the funds, furnish the reply. Have they answered the call to hate, degrade, and combine against the preachers? Let their increasing kindness and innumerable expressions of affection and confidence, answer the inquiry. Have they sprang from their sleep at the music of the enchanter, as Saul did to the divinations of the Witch of Endor, to dethrone the Conference and place the Association in the vacant seat? Let the expressions of devoted attachment to the old and well-tried Wesleyan economy on which they have long reposed in peace, furnish the answer.

5.—But, above all, the noble conduct of the Connexion, and, especially, the great body of officers at this crisis, is evidence of a sound and stable piety. It is one of the features of true religion, not “to be tossed to and fro with divers and strange doctrines, and *the cunning craftiness of men whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*” Surely the great majority of the Members of the Wesleyan Society have been in the school of Christ long enough to know whether they are, “following a cunningly devised fable,” or whether they have been taught “the truth as it is in Jesus.” Fickleness in religion, is always a sign either of a weak head or an unrenewed heart. Neither has been manifested by the vast majority of the people. They had examined the question of religion for themselves, long before these new lights rose to instruct them; they had been led to Christ and salvation, by the ministry so much maligned; so that when their confidence was attempted, the appeal was made against their own experience; they had enjoyed delightfully the means and communion of the Wesleyan system, to their comfort and edification; so that when it was sought to allure them into the wilderness, they could appeal to times, seasons, and places, when, in connexion with these people, they had met the Lord, and banqueted on the riches of his grace; and they had long, by prayers, zealous exertions, and costly sacrifices, laboured to extend the Connexion; so that when they were required to pull it down, it happened that they were expected to despoil and demolish that which they and their fathers had long been labouring to build up. They were prepared for this assault—they have taken their stand on experimental truth, and in a spirit of devoted piety, resisted the temptations both of craft and passion.

HINDE-STREET QUARTERLY MEETING.

(From *The Watchman.*)

We have received the following letter from Mr. PETER KRUSE, of Chelsea, and agree with him in the propriety of its publication, which would have taken place last week but for an accident.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE SIXTH LONDON CIRCUIT.

Dear Sir—Not being pleased with the spirit and demeanour of our Quarterly Meeting held at Hinde-street chapel, on Wednesday last, and being in some degree pained at the absence of the cordiality which ought to have prevailed, I am desirous of informing you, that if we look round, a better spirit and example may be discovered even at our own door. Last Thursday, I attended a meeting held at Great Queen-street chapel, being anxious to see how others thought and felt on subjects connected with the general welfare of Methodism.

Never have I paid a more agreeable visit. The proceedings at that meeting were conducted with great spirituality and profit. Though several matters were discussed with the amplest freedom, the frankness and candour of disposition shown by all, were truly honourable, and, as might be expected, led to a satisfactory and agreeable termination. I refer most particularly to the judicious, convincing, and friendly manner by which the meeting was addressed, as occasion required, by the chairman, the Rev Mr. Waterhouse; and by the other excellent preachers present, the Rev. Messrs. Cubitt and Beal, and our long tried friend, Rev. W. Jenkins.

I must here be permitted to say, that the sum total of what I heard at this meeting amounted to a noble and complete defence of the impartial and well intended conduct of the late Sheffield Conference towards the flock comprising the Methodist Societies. That I went to the Queen-street Quarterly Meeting with some small dissatisfaction on my mind, I am free to acknowledge; and I must now state with equal freedom, that every feeling of that sort was removed. I esteem the preachers very highly for their work's sake, and for the benefit I have derived from their ministrations. I have always acted, so far as I am able to judge, without submitting my understanding to the influence of

party spirit, and I think it right to avow, most unequivocally, that *I am satisfied with things as they are*—save and except the remaining dissension, which, in a few places, is not quite extinguished. I have the fullest confidence in the preachers, both in their individual and official capacity. The Conference always had my confidence, but this is especially the case with respect to that held during the present year; and without presuming too far, I may perhaps be allowed to say, that I have not been a careless observer of what has passed within the pale of Methodism, and have had opportunities for numerous personal inquiries—having been two and twenty years a member of the Society, ten years of which I held the office of Society Steward, and for at least eighteen years have attended the weekly meetings of stewards and leaders.

One word respecting a matter on which much mis-placed eloquence might many a time have been spared. During the long period I have just named, it has occasionally been my lot to hear certain charges brought against Members of Society, from various causes; but *I never saw a Member expelled*—and must also add, that in all cases of the sort, without exception, I have invariably found that *the best friend the accused had in the meeting was the preacher*; who was ever bent on putting the best possible construction on the conduct of the defective member; the chairman always had a perceptible bias on the merciful side. Indeed, few things have ever gratified me more, than to notice the kind and compassionate manner in which this unpleasant, but oft-times needful part of Methodist discipline has been enforced.

The fact is, our preachers are reluctant to amputate a member: it is the *dernier resort*; it is most unwillingly performed, and every impartial man with whom I ever spoke on the subject, has admitted, that if at any time harshness has crept into meetings convened for the trial of an accused person, the fault has rested with the persons aggrieved, and not with the minister called on to preside.

To refer once more to the Queen-street Quarterly Meeting, I admired the spirit and temper therein manifested. This praise must be yielded to Mr. Eckett and Mr. Nichol; neither of whom took refuge in noisy declamation: it is true they were defeated, and it was proper they should be. That circumstance shows, that an unsound cause, even though supported with talent, is sure to go down. Those gentlemen were met by the equally moderate, but more conclusive arguments of the sound and constitutional side, which were followed by an overwhelming majority.

I cannot help thinking that the manner in which the Quarterly Meeting at Great Queen-street Chapel was conducted, may be exhibited much to the advantage of a certain other meeting, held a little westward of it. Gentlemen should recollect that there are seasons and times when silence is wisdom, and that incessant loquacity, if like any thing on earth, reminds one of certain grotesque imitations of the human form, who are found caged with ceaseless chatter, in that part of the London Sixth Circuit, known by the name of the Zoological Gardens.

Let us hope that this stone of reproach will be speedily rolled away. The pastors of the Methodist Society deserve the love of the people, and I have no doubt, but that they will have it universally. May the time soon come, when Christian charity and good will shall take the place of every opposing sentiment; and when love shall reign in all hearts, and have undisputed sway.

I remain, Dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely,

SAMUEL F. SCOTT.

49, Lower Belgrave-place, Pimlico,
October 5, 1835.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

"MEN SINGULARLY FITTED FOR GREAT ACTIONS."

Sir—The following *exposé* of the conduct of the leaders and local preachers of the Whitehaven circuit, shows the extreme lengths to which men may be carried, who have withdrawn themselves from the restraining, softening, refining, and ennobling influences of religion, and abandoned themselves to the infuriating intoxication of pride and passion. Distinguished as these men already were for "great actions," they had not, it seems, reached the climax of their abominations. Let the words of our informant speak for themselves:—"I am sorry to say, that on the arrival of the new superintendent, they did not wait to see how he would act, or what was his character or disposi-

tion; but at a prayer-meeting he attended on the first evening of his arrival, they saluted him with kicking on the floor, screams, shouts, yells, and all sorts of noises. In vain, he inquired if there were no Christian persons present: his expostulations were drowned, and he was compelled to stop. Observing a chair placed as for a public meeting, he took it; on which they gave him to understand, they should choose a chairman of their own—a well known bully and blackguard named —. Upon the preacher again attempting to speak, the chairman informed him he should be heard when he had done; but they drowned his voice, and the meeting closed with the most shameful riot and confusion. They have since held meetings of their own three times a week, and set the superintendent completely at defiance. He is at a loss how to act, they are so unanimous and combined. He has since called upon some of them, but they have, in the rudest manner, bade him begone, and shutting the door in his face, told him to let them see him no more."

Such is the treatment experienced by a minister of Jesus Christ, coming in the fulness of the gospel of peace, and expecting, doubtless, to be cheered and encouraged on his entrance upon a new sphere of labour, by the affectionate sympathy of the people, and their fervent prayer for the success of his ministrations. For this end, he goes—mark!—on the *first* evening of his arrival, to the *prayer-meeting*. O shocking profanation! But instead of hearing the devout breathings and holy aspirations of the pious, and mingling his prayers with theirs for their mutual improvement, he is assailed with yells, screams, hootings, groans, and every means which malice could devise, to insult and annoy him! What a terrible revulsion of feeling must this holy minister of God have experienced! What must have been the indignation and agony of his soul, at so foul, so brutal, so diabolical an outrage, not only of the common decencies of life, but the obligations of religion! If this be a specimen of the reform projected by these rebels, we devoutly pray—from all such reformers, good Lord, deliver us! But we sicken at the term reform, as at present hacknied—it is a *misnomer*: it is another word for *destruction*, and stands associated with every species of violence; it is the disruption of all ties—Christian, social, and domestic; it would hurl the king from his throne, and the noble from his palace; it would pluck the mitre from the head of the bishop, force the minister from his pulpit, and destroy the confidence subsisting between him and his flock; it would place the master on a level with his servant, destroy all subordination and authority, and leave man the most terrible of all beings, when left to himself, without those conventional distinctions and restrictions which are the bond and cement of society. We wish it to be understood that we are favourable to reform, in its proper acceptation; viz.—the correction of abuses, and the redress of grievances, wherever they may exist; but let it be properly defined, limited, and applied. When, however, we see ruffians such as above alluded to, as well as the cut-throat demagogues of the state, screen their atrocities beneath the wing of reform, we abhor the term, and would unmask it, and make it stand out in its own true naked reality—the demon of discord, anarchy, and ruin. It is this demon which is now agitating our church and our country, and convulsing our once peaceful Societies. But let not our brethren be longer deceived. Open your eyes to the disgraceful scenes exhibited in our Connexion for the past twelve months, under the specious pretence of reform, and then judge, whether we are the wiser, the holier, or the better, in any respect, for these attempts at *reformation*. Let those, who will, choose the rule of the bramble, and put their trust in his shadow; we, for our part, will continue to sit under our own vine and our own fig-tree, and within our own sacred enclosure—enjoy the delightful repose, the calm tranquillity, the hallowed quiet, so opposed to the strife, agitation, and tumult it has been our painful duty thus to notice.

Oct. 17, 1835.

Y. Z.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

Sir—An article, signed M. M. D. appeared in No. 25 of the *Lantern*, which was headed, "Proceedings in the Chester Circuit." It contains, among some other things, an account of the loss of a Methodist Chapel and Society in the village of Helsby. The occurrence is narrated as "an instance that God will not let sin go unpunished." I wonder, Mr. Editor, at the presumption of this writer. Because a Mr. Burgess, acting as a "lord over God's heritage," says to the Wesleyan preachers, "you shall not preach any more in my chapel, for I have come to the determination to join the Association, and the Members will go with me," he is employed by "the Almighty to punish the representatives of Conference for their iniquities!"

The event is likewise given in the *Lantern* as a demonstration of the triumphant progress of Association principles. It is placed before the readers of that *godly* periodical, as "a glorious victory," which ought to call forth bursts of joy from all the soldiers of radicalism. To produce this encouraging effect, it was *necessary* not to enter into any particulars. I shall, therefore, Mr. Editor, supply this omission. Your readers will judge the chapel to be of no great magnitude, when I inform them that the Society contained only *ten* members. And even these have not all continued with Mr. Burgess. Some of them are determined to hold no fellowship with the Association. A new Society is formed; and more of the inhabitants wish to hear the gospel from Methodist preachers, than the house in which divine worship is conducted will accommodate. Tokens for good have been already vouchsafed, and a revival of the work of God is confidently expected.

The *Lantern's* correspondent also mentions the Rev. Mr. C. Dixon's visit to Norley. He exults that Mr. Dixon had "the mortification" to preach to a very small congregation in the chapel, and to find the people who have joined the Association fixed in their principles. This writer, however, found it expedient to pass over the same minister's visit to a neighbouring village, called Kingsley, where a *re-action* has taken place. It was not to be expected that he would tell the melancholy tale in the *Lantern*, that nearly the whole of a numerous Society have been surfeited with agitation and Associationism, and have, consequently, returned to their old and best friends.

There is one thing, Mr. Editor, asserted at the close of the *Frodsham* epistle on which I have animadverted, that rather pleases me. At the quarterly meeting of the Association held in Northwich, it was unanimously agreed "that they should lend their influence and *example* to promote the cause of *temperance*." I know many pious souls in Frodsham and its vicinity that will say, Amen.—Yours affectionately,

N. N. E.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have again to thank our Prescot friend; his communication not only pleases us, but will interest our readers:—"A more than usual interest is excited in the various means of grace; and, if we may judge by the number, and the spirit manifested by our congregations, 'Ichabod' is not yet written upon our ruins."

"Misfortune gives a man strange bedfellows." In a town not ten miles from Liverpool, objections were made by certain individuals to the services of two or three local preachers, who were in the habit of occasionally visiting their chapel. It appears, however, that these objectors have had fresh light and knowledge thrown not only upon themselves, but also on their once despised friends; for we find the objectors first and foremost in heading an opposition against Wesleyan Methodism in the town, and then inviting, receiving, and entertaining these said objected men—to *preach for them!*—aye, and on two successive Sabbaths too!! So much for the consistency of the "Grand Central!"

Communications have been received from N. N. E.—Y. Z.—Epsilon—Urbane—Sylvia—Principius.

We have also seen a "third epistle" from Ignatius, which was thrust under the door of our publisher. We advise him—poor simple fellow!—not to intermeddle with such subjects as he attempts to treat upon; his element is near the dock side.

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THE ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION ;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES ; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY ; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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THE PROSPECTS OF METHODISM.—No. 1.

THE MINISTRY.

IN forming an opinion of the probable destinies of Methodism, it seems natural to begin with the class of men who are most fully engaged in working the system. All history informs us how intimately the state of religion in any branch of the church, and the character, piety, and attainments of its pastorate, are connected. This is not surprising ; for the experimental and effective enunciation of the doctrines of the gospel from the pulpit, must depend very much on the spiritual maturity of those who teach them. There is a state of mind which cannot reflect the saving truths of religion : they fall like the rays of the sun on the eyes of the blind ; and if ministers do not perceive, themselves, the importance, adaptation, and urgent necessity of the separate doctrines of Christianity to the state of ignorant and unregenerate man, they cannot announce them to others.— Besides this, in an irreligious ministry, there can be no sympathy with the great objects of the gospel, but rather a feeling of repugnance towards them. The cries of penitence, the anxious inquiries and sorrows of persons seeking God—the assurance, peace, and joys of a state of liberty—the new character, tastes, and pursuits of the truly converted—the self-denial, spirituality, and zeal of men living in the love of God—and the scrupulous desire to keep a good conscience, and to attain a state of holiness, would, even if found, be a great annoyance to ministers destitute of religion ; and, instead of encouraging and promoting this order of things, they would invariably discountenance every such indication, and stigmatize this work of God as fanaticism. But a stronger reason than this exists, for the want of success in the case of an unconverted and unevangelical ministry ; it is, such men are not sent of God, and consequently cannot be employed as the ministers of his grace. As God is the fountain and author of experimental religion, and ministers are the messengers of his mercy and love, it follows, that their commission must be received from him, and the amount of good communicated, will depend, not on their own abilities, but on the divine influence resting on them, and transmitted through their ministry.

One of the most important and salutary provisions of the Wesleyan economy, is, that no one can, by any possibility, be admitted to the ministerial office, without professing to enjoy the converting grace of God; and for a longer or shorter period, previously giving all the proof of its reality which the subject admits. The rules on this subject rest on the true and scriptural principle, that the call, the gifts, the ability for the work, must be founded on a converted state of mind. It is possible that persons may have deceived the meetings through which candidates are obliged to pass, but we believe the attempt is a very rare occurrence, and success much more so. It is equally possible, that a minister, like another Christian, may allow, through negligence and the growth of sin, the substrata of piety in his mind to give way; and, with the forfeiture of his religious privileges and purity, the loss of his ministerial call may be involved. Allowing for these cases, and any other casualties to which the probation of all men in this world is exposed, it is of great consideration in calculating on the state and prospects of our religious community, that its ministry is a CONVERTED MINISTRY. The tone, intensity, and elevation of individual piety will, of course, vary, as it always has done; but, as at present constituted, it is impossible that men destitute of grace should enter, or if they do, remain in the ranks of our itinerancy. The laws regulating the new Theological Institution fully recognise this principle. No youth on his own choice, or the election of his parents and friends, can, by interest or any other means, find admission here. He must pass through the examinations of his own Quarterly Meeting, and, then, through the District Meeting, before he can be admitted into that seminary. Then we have a right to assume as a *general* rule that the Wesleyan ministry is composed of men who themselves have been "enlightened by the good word of God"—have received the privilege of justifying grace—have, by the powerful visitation and influence of the Holy Spirit, enjoyed a change of heart—have been raised, in a more or less degree, into "*sanctified* vessels meet for the master's use;" and that the spirit of devotion, the faith, the love, the principle, the purity, and the zeal arising from this new and elevated state of mind, belong to them. Much depends on this. Our confidence respecting the preservation and usefulness of Methodism is not grounded on its economy, but, primarily, on the blessing of God; and next, on a converted and spiritual ministry. If we could be persuaded that either of these were wanting—and where one is absent, the other will be absent also—then we should despair; but if we have proof of the divine blessing flowing through a sanctified and holy ministry, then we have a right to exercise a calm and unshaken confidence in the midst of the trials of the times.

With a high state of piety, every other qualification—allowing a divine designation to the work—will exist. Not in the same manner or degree, but gifts will arise out of religion, of the most useful and edifying description. Intellect soars to its loftiest flights, through an atmosphere cleared and enlarged by a strong and vigorous faith.

The judgment is exercised much more accurately, truly, and practically, on all subjects, earthly or heavenly, when the lower faculties and appetites are held in abeyance by the power of renewing and sanctifying grace, and the mind is free from the bias of passion, prejudice, selfish and sensual feeling. The tongue speaks most eloquently when the heart is warm. Let the sacred fire of divine love rouse the faculties, swell the bosom, excite to pity, kindle a hallowed zeal, and bind the soul to the cross of the Saviour, and then the preaching which impresses, awakens, persuades, and "wins souls to Christ," is secured. We are not without hope, that even "the railing accusations," and bitter reproaches, so lavishly thrown on the Methodist ministry will tend to improve it. These bitter draughts, are testing their principles, weaning them from external things, causing them to examine their motives, obliging them to study and meditate on divine truth, compelling them to be found more constant in prayer, and, by a course of experience and discipline, painful in itself, but still salutary, instructing them to live much in communion with their own hearts, and, especially, in the higher communion of God.

A placid state of the church is not favourable either to an elevated piety or profound divinity. The Augustan age of English theology was a period of intense strife and debate. Owen, Howe, Baxter, Calamy, and the Non-conformists, on the one side—and Jeremy Taylor, Hammond, Hall, Chillingworth, Hales, and the Episcopalians, on the other—thought, wrote, and preached, in the midst of the storms of the Commonwealth. Human nature itself is much the same in every age; but circumstances often call forth its latent powers in brilliant and majestic force, and we are indebted, incidentally, to the evils of these times, for the most profound, elaborate, practical, and eloquent theology to be found in the Christian church, in the writings of those noble spirits who were wound up to their elevation by disputes and trials. In a lower degree, we hope, a similar effect will arise out of our troubles. If Methodist preachers cannot be expected to accumulate, in mountain masses, thought, sentiment, criticism, eloquent discourses, and systematic theology, as they did: yet still, they may imitate their industry, devotion, holiness, and zealous preaching. And, if one desire be more prominent in our feelings than another, it is, that the suspicions now thrown on the body of preachers, may lead them to follow the example of these great and excellent men, and in every way improve their ministry by "*the things they suffer.*"

Another question of great consequence is, the real, *ex animo*, attachment of the present race of Preachers to the Wesleyan system of doctrine. By this we do not so much mean the peculiarities of the system, as distinguished from Calvinism, as the experimental and evangelical manner in which Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors held the truth. We question, indeed, whether the preachers of the present day are so learned and expert in the metaphysics of the Calvinistic controversy as their predecessors;

but we think they are equally, and even more, evangelical. The impression left on the mind of the writer of this article, by his recollections of the sermons he was in the habit of hearing when young, from some of the old preachers, most of whom are now no more, is, that many of them were poor and meagre in doctrinal sentiment, and approached very nearly to the dry and frigid system of the old Arminian school. This is easily accounted for. They had lived in the time of the great controversy betwixt Fletcher, and the Hills, and Toplady: and, as is not very unnatural, chose the highest ground on the controverted points. The extreme of truth touches the confines of error; and in their zeal to avoid Calvinism, and guard the truth from Antinomian abuses, they were led to adopt a mode of preaching which, being very cautious and well fenced round against what they considered a dangerous heresy, they were prevented from boldly, fully, and warmly exhibiting the freeness and fulness of the grace and provisions of the gospel. There were many glorious exceptions; and these consequences do not necessarily, or, indeed, legitimately arise out of the Wesleyan doctrines, as taught by their author, and defended in the inimitable writings of Fletcher. But minds of inferior grade cannot always see the harmony of evangelical doctrines, and in their honest avoidance of error, it is quite possible that they may, unintentionally, have abstracted much valuable truth. Without intending to depreciate the qualities of men, every way honest, and some of them pious and useful in the highest degree, we believe this was the fact with regard to great numbers. They considered it to be their duty to flee as far from Calvinism as possible, and in doing this, they frittered away, and neutralized many of the most vital and important verities of the gospel.

We neither intend to indulge in flattery or boast, but to state the honest conviction of our minds, when we say, we believe that the balance has been recovered in recent times, and the Wesleyan doctrines are much more evangelically held now, than they were for some years after the death of our great founder. As few persons have lived long enough in the Connexion to judge of the question from a recollection of the preaching of former times, as compared with the present, we have no objection to put its issue on the published discourses, and other writings, of the two periods. But these remarks may be considered uncalled for, as the orthodoxy of the Preachers is not disputed. If any thing, it is thought, by some, that there is an undue and bigoted attachment to the Wesleyan theology. Allowing this, for the moment, it only shows that there exists a scrupulous and conscientious regard to what is believed to be the truth, or an honest purpose to guard against error, and secure to the people a wholesome doctrine. But we refer to this question, not for purposes of controversy, but of practical deduction. The point of time in which we live is important: the events passing around us are of the most ominous kind—the external pressure on first principles, almost unexampled—and the assault made on our community, most reckless and threatening. What is to be the destiny of the Connexion in future? Is it rotten at the root, and incapable of surmounting the difficulties of the times?—In answering these questions, we have no inclination to deceive ourselves, or to be instrumental in deceiving others. Many considerations fix our attention, some of which tend to produce sorrow; and others, fear. We could enter into large and long discussions on these topics; and, of course, when there is a collision of principle, it must be difficult to decide. We are not ashamed to avow that we look out with anxiety to find an anchorage for our hopes. Amongst other considerations, we fix on the evangelical tone of the ministry, and infer, from this fact, the certain stability of the Body. This may be fairly done, on the ground, that it is the gift and creation of the great Head of the Church, and indicates his purpose to employ it to promote his glory. When a ministry possessing evidence of a sound conversion to God—of requisite spiritual gifts—of a devotional spirit, of devoted love to scriptural truth

—of zeal and fervour sufficient to induce them to abandon all the endearments and comforts of home, and hopes of secular advancement in life—of a faith so expansive as to lead them to expect the accomplishment of the great end of redemption, as marked out in the prophecies; and also to act on their convictions by causing them to leave their native country, and fix their abode amid the solitudes of the wilderness, for the purpose of leading a lost world to Christ;—we say, when this state exists, we have evidence that God has raised up such a ministry to accomplish his merciful designs amongst men. There is harmony in all the works of Deity. He never wrought a miracle without proposing some valuable end. He never gave the prophetic Spirit, and revealed future events, but in connexion with some great purpose. When he sent his incarnate Son into the world, it was to redeem it to himself, and fix the foundations of his kingdom; and when he called the Apostles to their office, it was to bear testimony to the death and resurrection of Christ. So, in like manner, when he creates spiritual gifts, and raises up an evangelical and powerful ministry, it is to accomplish some great work in connexion with the interests and advancement of true religion.

We find this to have been the case in every period of time. Is there not an affinity betwixt the call of Messrs. Wesley and Whitfield to their task of preaching the gospel, and the Methodism now existing in the world? The extraordinary qualifications bestowed on these highly-favoured servants of God, were not given with a view to their personal advancement, or to terminate in themselves; but that this nation, and indirectly, indeed, the world, might be visited by their powerful ministry, and awaked from the slumbers of its guilty and dangerous state. We compare no living men to them; but if it is found that the same spirit and gifts now rest on a numerous class of their followers, though in a much lower degree, then, it is fair to conclude, that they are bestowed for similar purposes. As there is some danger of giving offence, even by this distant and qualified analogy, will the objectors give us permission to take our illustration from lower examples? When God called Nelson, Mather, Pawson, Taylor, and a host of other noble spirits, from the common avocations of life, and committed to them “*a dispensation of the gospel*,” did not the call imply the intention to employ them usefully in the spiritual vineyard? The effects which followed their labours give the answer to this question. They were the instruments of building up the church in their day; and, notwithstanding it had to pass through great trials, yet it was preserved in their hands; and thousands, and tens of thousands, were converted to God.

In similar cases, we are to expect like effects. Our hope and belief is, that the same spirit is given to the Preachers of the Body, at the present period; and given, too, for the self-same end—the perpetuation and enlargement of the work of God. Were men found, then, to give unequivocal proof of sincerity and purity of heart and character, and yet testified that they believed themselves moved by the Holy Ghost, to take their ministry upon them?—So there are now. Were these selections made by the great Head of the Church, from among persons who had been employed in common life, showing that they assumed not the ministry as a *profession*, but even in opposition to all their previous views, habits, and hopes?—So they are now. Were minds elevated to comprehend the great doctrines of the gospel, and accurately to preach them, which none can do but by the spirit of God?—So they are now. Were striplings, like David, following his father’s flocks, presented with the prophetic harp and lyre, and taught to sound forth the notes of redeeming mercy and love in impassioned streams?—So they are now. Were men found willing to traverse the American continent and the West Indian islands, as well as every part of this empire?—Behold, now, even this is surpassed. In the African Kraal, amidst rudeness, barbarity, wild beasts, and pestilence; on the continent of the East, amongst the most sickening superstitions, as well as in the islands of the Pacific, amongst canibals, modern missionaries are found. As long as this spirit exists, the Connexion has nothing to fear. It is delightful to see how wonderfully God, in this way, supplies the wastes of life, and

"baptizes" the growing youth of the Connexion "*for the dead*;" and the most valuable and important indication of all by this is, that He still lives and reigns amongst us. Desertions may take place, rents may be made, the external frame-work of the church may be broken through; but as long as this spirit continues to rest on his servants, both preservation and enlargement are certain.

Fidelity to the true genius and spirit of primitive Methodism being thus manifested, is a favourable sign. Mr. Wesley expressed his own view of this, when he said that Methodists were raised up to "spread scriptural Christianity through the land;" and, we may add, through the world. Nothing short of this harmonizes with the designs of redemption, and the truth and promises of the gospel. Snapping the figments of prejudice, by which he had been held in trammels, Mr. Wesley adopted the catholic sentiment, that "the world was his parish." But the recognition of the *general* principle, that it was the duty of the Christian church to carry out the provisions of the gospel to the ends of the earth, did not cause him to neglect *particular* openings of usefulness. Minds of a less pious and practical cast, are in danger of overlooking local and present opportunities of doing good, in rendering their admiration, fealty, and support to the general plans of Christian philanthropy. Whilst they expatiate amidst the extensive and distant glories and triumphs of prophecy, and of the cross, they often forego the most urgent calls to extend religion and human happiness even at their own door. Not so the founders of Methodism. Whilst they considered the whole human family as included in their commission to preach the gospel, they neglected no means to make the Saviour known in their own country. As time was afforded, they visited every part of the nation; and, in private houses, streets, lanes, and market-places; in fields, commons, and by the side of hills and high roads, with intrepid courage and fidelity, they lifted up their voice, and called sinners to repentance.—Finer specimens of devoted love to God and man, laborious and untiring zeal, ministerial abilities and power were never witnessed, in this fallen world, than are seen in the labours of these men of God. Greater and more astonishing effects were never produced on the masses of mankind, than by the preaching of these heralds of mercy and salvation. Indeed, in one thing, we find a difference between the Reformation by Luther and the revival of religion by Wesley; it consists in the quality of the persons who became the disciples of the two great movements. Princes, Electors, and Kings gave their countenance, counsels, support, and even arms, to the maintenance of the Reformation; whilst, generally speaking, the poor and middle classes only enlisted on the side of Methodism. It would be going beyond our line, to dissent on the first case; and it is not our intention to insinuate, that, the countenance of kings and princes was not a favour of providence. Considering the circumstances of the case, the powers armed against them, the means employed by popery to quench the rising light, and crush the infant Reformation by the cruelties of the Inquisition, we should rather say, that the raising up of states to protect these messengers of the Saviour's love, mark the fostering care of the governor of the universe. And yet we are not sure, but this grand work suffered in its progress and efficiency, ultimately, by this event. Be this as it may, there is this difference between the Reformation and Methodism—the one descended from the highest ranks of society to the lowest, whilst the other began at the bottom and ascended upwards. It was the glory of the leaders of the two branches of Methodism, Wesley and Whitfield, "to preach the gospel to the poor."

Without claiming for any man living the comprehensive charity, and the laborious zeal of our great founder, it may be affirmed truly, that his views and spirit, live in the system he has left; and it is a part of the duty of every preacher to take up his great objects of "*good will to man*," and, as he has the power and ability, to carry them out. It is important to possess good rules of duty, and also to have the example of those who have gone before constantly present to the mind. The Wesleyan preachers may individually come short of the high standard they acknowledge; but it is something not to have discarded it. They have not yet broken the tables of law given by their founder; or, in any way, attempted to shorten or narrow the field of operation, marked out by him. They still recognise the obligation to extend the ordinances of the gospel through the world, and to preach it to every creature. Their schemes and plans of benevolence reach to every tribe and family of man; and whether the work has been accomplished rightly or wrongly, the fact is undeniable, that more has been done, in the last twenty years, to extend the principles and plans of Mr. Wesley, than in any other similar period of our history. In that time, we have witnessed an augmentation of charity, of zeal, of faith, of exertion, on the part of the whole Body, of the most cheering and en-

couraging description. And whatever may be thought respecting the diminished ardour and self-denial of the preachers, the Connexion has never wanted men, ready to sacrifice country, kindred, and all the privileges of a regularly settled state of church communion, to preach the "*unsearchable riches of Christ*" in every part of the world, although it was next to certain, that they would be called upon to sacrifice their lives in the attempt. The silent and solitary graves of many of our martyred brethren, marked by no sculptured stone or mournful cypress, but watched by the eye of heaven, attests the truth of this. In the midst of the most astonishing enterprizes which ever men witnessed in the church on earth; the finest and most extended scenes of triumph ever granted by the God of heaven, to any portion of his people; the rising civilization of the rudest tribes of barbarism, as well as the joyful shouts of the tens of thousands of converted heathens, in every quarter of the world; it is asserted, that the primitive spirit of Methodist enterprize has evaporated. Not in the language of boasting, but of glorying in the cross of Christ, and the goodness of God, we rejoice that this imputation is met by facts open as day-light, and within the reach of every candid mind, fully confirming our position, that the original spirit of Methodism still lives and breathes in the system and the ministry.

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his gracious influence, the gospel word will be attended by a divine and saving power.

A thorough attachment on the part of the Preachers to the economy and discipline of the Connexion, is, undoubtedly favourable to its stability. Various causes have concurred to produce this loyalty to the system. Perhaps particular forms of sentiment and opinion are transmissible, and the circumstance that, in the main, the discipline of the Body is that which was left by Mr. Wesley, has had its effect. We have remarked, that the elder Preachers, who knew this extraordinary man personally—had the benefit of his example, advice, and friendship—were blessed with his fatherly counsels, kindness, and affection—and beheld his saintly and apostolic labours—were most ardently and enthusiastically attached to his person, and paid a profound respect to his opinions and advice. These men on whom the mantle of Wesley fell, as he ascended to heaven, became, in their turn, the fathers and guides of the Connexion; and his views, habits of thought, opinions on church polity, as well as his written code, through them were transmitted, as a legacy to the Societies. Hence, in seasons of trial—such as soon came after his death, and have been followed at different intervals since—this deference to the opinions of the great founder of the Community, proved as a sheet-anchor in the storm. His name, and well known views on litigated subjects, have proved a rallying point, when, without their influence, all would have been disorder and chaos. We are not amongst those who despise experience, history, and authority. What is history but the record of events from whence a discriminating judgment may receive useful lessons, and deduce the most valuable principles and rules of action? It is remarkable that the world owes all its valuable institutions—its wise and useful principles—its most equitable codes of law—its erudite and profound systems of science, and the arts—its admired productions of genius, learning, and eloquence—as well as its stupendous moral and religious movements, to single and individual minds. Assemblages and masses change, alter, *reform*, and destroy, but they never create. They can operate on the science of things, discovered and made plain to their hands—as builders can erect a palace on the specifications of the architect—but they cannot discover and elucidate the science itself. No union of minds could have laid the platform of Wesleyan polity, or have agreed to work out the great plans of piety and good contemplated in the first instance. The world owes the existence of this system to one mind—who, himself, following the light of Scripture, and the openings and calls of providence, formed the nucleus of the grand moral operation, and then guided and directed the work itself. His knowledge was profound—his deference to truth most entire—his views, motives, and principles were, beyond suspicion, disinterested and benevolent—his piety towards God, warm, devout, confiding; but infinitely removed from any thing approaching to fanaticism—his respect for antiquity, and the authority of the church, great, as a guide to his own proceedings, without being put in the place of the law of God and of duty—his mind, pre-eminently practical—and every measure he adopted was done deliberately, and only after a careful consideration of the divine authority and will. Besides, he lived long to conduct and witness the working of his own plans of piety, and, as occasion might arise, to alter and adjust the different part of the machine to the exigencies of the case. He took others into his counsels, not to govern himself by their opinions, but to receive the benefit of their advice, and, chiefly, to initiate them into his own views, and to prepare them to carry on the same glorious work. Is it not most fitting that the descendants of such a man as this, should reverence his name, and respect the doctrinal and disciplinary system he has left as their inheritance? It may be much more glorious, for every hair-brained theorist to employ his time in building castles in the air, which he dignifies with the name of legislation, but truth lies within a very limited compass, and the principles of a useful and practical working of Christianity are very few, and are, we fully believe, found in the economy left us by Mr. Wesley.

In a copy of the "Private Minutes," (for, it seems, *private*, as well as public Minutes are published, for the benefit of a favoured few,) of the New Connexion, which we perused a short time ago, we were astonished to find a resolution of Conference, that the name "*Wesley*," should be discarded in all their future proceedings.—They legislatively determined that they would renounce the name as obnoxious. The reason of this is obvious: it stood in the way of their system and proceedings. This is fair enough, only they ought to have published the resolution in their *public*, instead of their private Minutes, that the world might know that they renounced all identity with "*Wesleyan*" Methodism. The day is very distant, we hope, before that endeared and venerated name, to which *they* owe their existence, will be cast out as a thing of nought by the *old* Connexion. If, however, the present revolutionary faction gained their point, in all human probability this would soon be done;—and, we add, it *ought* to be done. We admire honesty; and as the New Connexion found themselves drifting far from the

polity of Wesley, they did right in renouncing his name. A superstitious feeling will, no doubt, be attributed to us; but, notwithstanding, we do hope, that his name, his opinions, his doctrines, his economy, will long exist as the centre of attraction and union—a basis of fellowship and communion—and as a palladium of economy and government, amongst both Preachers and people, for many ages to come. That name has hitherto been the security of the Connexion. All parties remaining, agreeing to defer to it. Once abandoned—and we split into a thousand fragments, or only exist as a putrid, political party, devoid of the life of religion; retained—an obligation rests on the great body of both ministers and people, to promote, by all means in their power, the purely religious ends of the community.

But it would be a perfect calumny on the great body of Preachers, to affirm, or insinuate, that they are kept in a state of union by the mere influence of a name, however great. The operation of the doctrines and system of Methodism has been before the world for nearly a century, and their attachment is founded on a conviction of its utility. If they were persuaded that another form of economy would secure the successful preaching of the gospel to as large an extent—preserve the doctrines of Mr. Wesley, pure and entire—promote as fully as the present mode the conversion of sinners—and the peace and holy living of the people, no reason can be imagined for their obstinate attachment to the present. The ministers of the Connexion know very well, that, if its structure were altered, they would be parties in the change, and also, be transferred to the new state of things. But in meditating any great and organic alteration, they are met with the astounding circumstance, that the system, as it is, has been, under God, the instrument of originating, promoting, and perpetuating the most extensive revival of religion which has taken place in modern times. If the indirect influence which it has exerted on other bodies—the number of ministers and agents it has supplied—the noble Missionary field it has opened and richly cultivated, as well as the giving birth to the great American Methodist Episcopal Church, be taken into account, it will be found that our estimate of the moral glories and triumphs of Methodism is not at all overrated. No doubt, the present race of Preachers feel an awful responsibility resting on them, in relation to the charge deposited in their hands. As men of common reflection and sensibility, it must be a matter of serious concern to attempt, essentially, to alter and impair a system of religion coming to them crowned with ten thousand triumphs, and marked in a very special manner as the chosen medium of heaven, to bestow salvation on myriads of immortal men. The puppet demagogues and reformers of the day would, with perfect *sang froid*, and unfeeling temerity, overthrow the whole economy, for the sake of exerting their own unfledged skill in building a new fabric—for what is the wisdom of Wesley, and the old school, compared with theirs?—but men of conscience and reflection must pause and hesitate, before they can give themselves to so presumptuous a task. As Methodism is not the work of man, but the gift of God, and has grown up under his fostering care, it cannot be the duty of any parties belonging to it to pull down and destroy that which he has built up. This sentiment, we doubt not, enters very deeply into the feelings of the preachers. The question respecting the change of the constitution, is not, to them, a matter of taste, but of *principle*. Those who are urging on the reformation, as it is called, must recollect, that they are pressing their views on the conscience of a thousand ministers, as well as tens of thousands of pious people, who are pledged by every consideration of obligation, duty, and religion, to resist the assault. As external pressure on the surface of a globular body only renders the centre more firm, so, we are persuaded, the harsh, cruel, and anti-christian means, resorted to, to coerce the conscience and religion of so large a body of men will only rouse them to greater resolution, decision, and unbending determination to maintain the truth against all aggression.

But this reference to conscience, leads us to a much higher consideration than even the one we have mentioned. It is, the conformity of the Wesleyan system to the Holy Scriptures. Nothing can bind the conscience, but the truth and authority of God. Here conscience, properly speaking, begins its functions. We may be instructed and edified by the writings, opinions, and examples of wise and good men; but we are not obliged implicitly to adopt their sentiments, or imitate their conduct. But when we enter the field of scriptural truth, we change our ground altogether. This is sacred. God is the teacher, and his voice is heard. All that is left us is to learn his will. There is no room for philosophical discussion. Conscience here begins its sacred office, and the laws by which it is bound and ought to be governed, are the sacred laws of truth and God. Then the only question for discussion is—*Is Methodism scriptural, or is it not?* In judging of this—a full, and not a partial and limited view, ought to be taken of the matter. Are the great and essential doctrines and disci-

pline of the Body accordant with the truth? Some minor matters, now exalted into essentials, and made subjects of angry and contentious debate, are only considered as prudential regulations, calculated to promote edification, in the system of Mr. Wesley. At the present day, the rights of class-leaders and other officers to administer discipline, and exercise a co-pastorship with the Preachers, is a question of constant dispute, and forms the ground of the present agitation; whereas, Mr. Wesley states, that class meetings are only *prudential means of grace*; and, consequently, the very existence of the office contingent on these *prudential means*. We do not affirm, or intend to insinuate, that these meetings are *unscriptural*; but we make the reference to show how dangerous it is to judge of a large system of religion in separate parts; or to exalt that which is a mere *accident* into the importance of an *essential* thing. Taking the doctrines, the discipline, the ministry, the spirit and objects, the communion and fellowship, together with the effects of Methodism—as a whole, and comparing it with scripture and the practices of the primitive church, down to the period when inspiration and authentic record terminated, we have no doubt, but it will be found true to the apostolic model; and, in fact, bear a nearer resemblance to the state of the first churches, than any thing existing in the world.

This circumstance has had the most weight with the Preachers. If they could have hesitated respecting the obligation to maintain a state of religion which had all the outward marks of being a work of God, they can have no doubt respecting the duty of walking by his word. The temptation to deviate is now very great. The age is *liberal*; and, amongst other indications of liberality, is a *latitudinarian* spirit on the subject of the authority of the scriptures. Principles of political science and human legislation, now so rife in general society, are adopted by politico-religionists, and made the constant ground of judgment in spiritual matters. It is thus attempted to erect the polity of the church, on the science of the world. The consequence of this is, to put away the authority of the Bible; and the maintenance of a purely scriptural rule or precedent in an argument on Christian polity, is to raise an outcry loud and vociferous. This might do for Rome and for some distant age, but it is totally inadmissible in *this* day and in *this* country. This is assuming that the truths of the word of God are variable; and although they might do for barbarous times, they must now be accommodated to the spirit of the age. In maintaining the contrary sentiment, that the Bible is immutable, and that we have no right to alter its principles and rules, a charge of bigotry is certain; and, in asserting that view of the case, the Methodist Preachers have been exposed to incessant opposition and reproach.

But the present unexampled union of the Wesleyan ministers, is also most hopeful, as regards the permanent interests of Methodism. This circumstance has, indeed, been construed into a symptom of evil and corruption, by our enemies. It may, however, be a sign of good, notwithstanding. Suppose it has originated in no higher a feeling than that of self-preservation, it is, even so far, a pledge of security. It is not unnatural, when the avowed agitators of the Connexion combined for the purpose of entirely subverting the institutions of the Body, that its ministers and guardians should unite in self-defence, and in the support of that which they believed to be the ark of God. And will it be considered a crime, when a class of innocent and harmless men are hooted and hunted as animals to be worried and destroyed, that a sense of danger should drive them to a closer attachment to each other? This shows most clearly that they had confidence in each other's integrity and honour. When they were invited and coaxed by the Association to come over to them, become their companions, and enjoy the felicity of their love, they turned away in utter disgust, and gave proof of a full and unlimited confidence in their own brethren. They knew them well; and is it within the possibility of things, that, in a time like the present, with so many allurements to a contrary practice, that the Preachers would have retired from the storms without to a more full and frank reliance on each other, had they not been persuaded, from the knowledge they had of each other, that, next to God, there was the place of safety?

But we believe this state of feeling demonstrates the absence of a selfish principle, to any extent, in the body of Preachers. Had factious men existed in any number in the Conference, they would assuredly have chosen this period, especially, to advance their own schemes and interests. Instead of this being the case, it has shown that no such spirit existed. If the brethren entertained any diversity of opinion on the polity and administration of the Body, they had the wisdom and piety to merge any little feeling on that score, and nobly to rally round each other to support a great public principle. This is a proof of their hearty disinterestedness. Little and factious minds seize every occasion to further their own selfish interests, although it may be by the costly sacrifice of religious and public institutions; but, instead of this, we behold the

largest assemblage of Preachers which ever met in Conference, unanimously plighting themselves in the most solemn manner, to support that cause to which they had devoted their energies, and their lives. And yet we do not even attribute this delightful state of feeling to either a sense of danger or to human magnanimity, but to the blessing and Spirit of God. Religious love and purity is the only element in which such union can exist. This expels the selfish passion, and nothing else. Other motives and feelings might be auxiliaries; but, had the Spirit and love of God been absent, inferior considerations could not have superinduced that which religion only could create. Our hopes are built on the assurance we have in this, and many other "*signs*," that God has not left us. His presence and blessing are our security; and, as long as he graciously communicates a spirit of unity and power, so long the Connexion is perfectly safe. With a thousand faithful ministers placed in the country, pledged to a firm adherence to the system of Wesleyan Methodism—prayerfully and piously devoted to its great objects—actuated, notwithstanding the assertions to the contrary, with an affectionate desire to promote the best interests of their charge—zealously and broadly proclaiming to large congregations the great and saving truths of the gospel, and united to each other in the bonds of a confiding and fraternal affection;—we say, a cause so supported, is not to be despaired of; and when the present dark and cloudy day clears up, its massiveness and beauty will be more distinctly seen than ever.

RICHARD BAXTER AND THE ASSOCIATION,
ON THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE.

"The office of the sacred ministry is a *mixed* relation.

"I.—As the minister is related to *Christ*, he is his servant, or minister by office, that is, one commissioned by him for that sacred work. Note again, that by virtue of the general commission or institution of the office *in specie*, the *power* is conveyed from Christ to the individual person, and that the church (electors or ordained), are not the donors, authorisers, or obligers, but only instruments of designing an act recipient, and delivering him possession. The causation or efficiency of Christ in making any one a minister is—1st, giving him competent knowledge—2d, giving him competent goodness, as *love* to God, truth, and souls, and willingness for the work—3d, giving him competent *abilities* for execution. 2.—The immediate conveyance or act of collation, is—1st, an obligation laid upon the person to do the work—2d, authority given him to warrant him, and to oblige others. The work is—1st, teaching—2d, ruling—3d, worshipping. As to the object, it is—1st, the world to be converted—2d, the converted to be baptized and congregated or ordered into particular societies (so far as may be). The baptised and congregated to be—1st, taught—2d, ruled—3d, guided in worship. From all which resulteth an office, which is ministerially subordinate to Christ, as—1st, the prophet or teacher—2d, the ruler—3d, the high priest and lover of his church; and it may be aptly called both a teaching ministry; a ruling ministry (not by the sword, but by the word); and a priesthood or priestly ministry.

II.—As the pastor is related to the *church*, he is—1st, a constituted part of political churches—2d, he is Christ's minister for the church and for Christ, that is, to teach, rule, and worship, with the church. He is *above* the church, and greater than it, as to order and power, and not the minister of the church, as the *efficient* of the ministry; but he is less and worse than the church finally and materially; and is *finally* the church's minister, as the physician is the patient's physician; not made a physician by him, but *chosen* and *used* as his physician for his cure. So that, to speak properly, he is not *from* them, but *for* them. He is Christ's minister for their good; as the shepherd is his master's servant *for* his flock, and so, *finally*, only the servant of the sheep."—[Baxter's Christian Directory, page 792 Ed. 1673.] The following statements put forth by the Association, are somewhat different from the views entertained by this great divine:—"They tell you that God gives the power. I deny it. God gives a minister of the Gospel qualifications, and in the exercise of those qualifications he supports him; but as the governor of the people he is to seek his power *from* them. If their origin be from the people, and if they are continued by the support of

the people, and the object be the promotion of their interests, where can the preacher get his rights, but from the people? A minister has no inherent right to govern; God and Christ have that right and no other. What the people give they can controul, and what they can controul they can withdraw. It is all sophistry together. There are no rights but what you give (applause).”—[*Lantern*, p. 59.]—The practical application of this novel doctrine is not left to inference and conjecture, but is already matter of fact. It may be seen in the great principle of the Association, namely—that of “stopping the supplies.” A is an active and enterprising merchant. B C and D have befriended him with their wealth in various ways, and for many years, and have also intimated to him their intention to continue to do so. Encouraged by this patronage, A, with the most laudable designs, extends his connexions, until brought under very heavy pecuniary engagements. B C and D now suddenly recollect, that A has a pretty freehold and entailed property, bequeathed by his father, to be transmitted to his son; and, accordingly, go and tell him that unless the said estate is forthwith made over to them, they have agreed to “stop the supplies.” A either yields, and is deprived of the “inheritance of his fathers;” or he resists, and is involved in commercial embarrassment and ruin. We should think the conduct of these gentlemen would not be deemed very honourable on ‘Change, and are quite sure that it is the effect of the spirit of Ahab, who had sold himself to work wickedness, operating in persons under different circumstances. In the month of August last, the Conference, having long enjoyed the confidence and pecuniary support of the numerous Societies; and fairly calculating on a continuance of the same friendly co-operation, undertook to prosecute, in conjunction with the lay portion of its several committees, vast and expensive plans of benevolence, for the amelioration of the moral condition of man, both at home and abroad; and, in doing this, became bound for the payment of large and numerous sums of money during the course of the year. A few weeks after this, Dr. Warren and his friends in Manchester, Liverpool, and elsewhere, recollected the pastoral authority of the Conference over the Societies, and thought that, if this were but placed in their own hands, it would render them far more illustrious than they had ever been before. So they at once declare, that, unless this same authority is surrendered to them forthwith, they will “stop the supplies.” Smith, of Stockport, swears there there are 40,000 persons, and the *Lantern* says about 80,000, who have entered into this conspiracy.

The Conference may now choose between embarrassment and bankruptcy, and the surrender of that discipline which it has received from the fathers of the Connexion in the form of a sacred trust, to be transmitted unimpaired to posterity. A few friends have ventured to say that the way in which the Conference has been treated, is not perfectly fair and honourable. But this, we are told, is merely the outcry of the priests at the loss of their pence. “The preachers have no rights but what the people give,” and “what the people give they can controul, and what they can controul they can withdraw.” And as the sovereign Association has “withdrawn” all these rights accordingly, it is in vain to say any thing on behalf of the preachers, for “it is all sophistry together;” since, where no rights are possessed, no wrongs can be endured.

There are other exemplifications of this doctrine. A superintendent preacher in Liverpool, *sans ceremonie*, has been expelled from the chair. The same feat has been performed at Carlisle. An orator at the Liverpool meeting says, “then if you fix him (the superintendent) in the chair, as we did at Dudley, by not letting him select his stewards (loud laughter), or, as at Stourbridge, where they would not let him leave, till he behaved like a gentleman—(renewed laughter).” As to Mr. Barber, at Camelford, the *Lantern* states “the cry was raised, ‘to your tents.’ Off we went to the inn, after giving the priest notice on the spot, that our connexion with him ceased from that day. A committee was immediately appointed to arrange for working the circuit *without* him.” The preachers, it is said, have no “rights” but what the people give, and as the “people” did not choose, in *any* of the above cases, to “give the preachers the benefit of any thing like a trial, fair or unfair, they were, of course, condemned and punished without one.” The Rev. J. A. James, in his work on Christian Fellowship, makes the following observations:—“It is my decided conviction, that in many of our churches, the pastor is depressed far below his just level. He is considered merely in the light of a speaking brother. He has no official distinction or authority. He may flatter like a sycophant, he may beg like a servant, he may woo like a lover, but he is not permitted to enjoin like a ruler. His opinion is received with no deference, his person treated with no respect; and in the presence of some of his lay tyrants, if he say any thing at all, it must be somewhat similar to the ancient soothsayers; he is only permitted to peep and mutter from the dust. The tyranny of a minister has some shadow of excuse, in the circumstance of his being invested with an office, the duties

of which are not defined with accuracy ; but the tyranny of a church over their pastor is without apology, for they have no office, and therefore no power.”*

If the Rev. gentleman ever read the *Lantern*, he will perhaps get fresh light, for we are there told, instead of having “no power,” the church has all power, as the “preachers have no rights, but what the people give.”

One effect of the present “anti-Wesleyan movement” has been, to give prominence to a class of men, who have, hitherto, not openly aspired to pre-eminence in Methodism. The chairman of the Liverpool Association is in the spirit trade.” The chair made vacant, by the expulsion of a preacher in that town, was immediately filled by a person connected with the “spirit trade.” Of the two deputies recently sent to Carlisle, one of them was “in the same line.” As to the Dudley “wholesale and retail wine and spirit merchant,” it is said there are—we know not how many—circuits under his “able management,” and he publicly boasts of being lord paramount at home. These are conspicuous characters, among what are called “the people ;” and the preachers have no rights but what the “people” give, and what the “people” give they can controul, and whatever Methodism may be at present, a ministry created and controlled by the gin-sellers, will certainly prove a more intolerable nuisance than even the dram-shops themselves.

OTHER ENDS TO BE ATTAINED, BY AGITATION, BESIDE WESLEYAN REFORM.

David Rowland, for instance, is evidently wishful to be revenged upon the author of his own expulsion. Twelve months ago, this disciple of the Doctor was full of warlike propensities ; and was quite resolved, that either the preachers should bow down to him at once ; or, a battle should be fought, in which they were sure to be defeated. So away he went to Manchester—formed an alliance with the Warrenites—mustered his Liverpool forces—and then, in a public meeting, called upon the enemy to surrender at discretion, as he wished for nothing more than peace upon his own terms. Resistance was offered, and the conflict began. “Men singularly fitted for great actions” do not always perform them ; and our hero blundered, and was defeated. Not being able to shine as a warrior, he has now assumed the character of a martyr ; and as nothing creditable can be said about his doings, he has the more to say about his sufferings ; hoping that tears may excite pity, where valour fails to attract admiration. Accordingly the country has been filled with dolorous accounts of the wrongs which this poor man has sustained, in not being suffered to have all his own way, and become the petty despot of the Liverpool North Circuit.

This was the burden of a part of his speech, at the Rochdale meeting. Many preachers, he observed, on hearing his statement previously to the Conference, had said that no preacher *could* have acted as the Rev. S. Jackson was reported to have done. Yet, after uttering these sentiments, not one of them had come forward to bring this same S. J. to justice. His inference from their statements is, that the preachers are all corrupt together. Other people, perhaps, would infer, that as one story is good until another be told, so these preachers, on hearing counter statements, might possibly have altered their views. But how came David to leave his case in the hands of the preachers ? Why did he not boldly come forward and plead his own cause ? The Conference pledged itself to the Association, in the face of the country, to hear any complaint which might be made by any party, or by any individual. No complainant made his appearance.

Perhaps he will say the preachers were accomplices, and it was useless to seek justice at their hands. But then look at his own case. There were six honest men on the jury by which he was tried ; and, therefore, he was convicted in spite of all the rest, who were a decided majority, and known to be his accomplices. Surely six honest men might have been found among four hundred preachers, especially as one

* See an acute pamphlet, called the “Wesleyan Crisis,” by C. Welch.

of them was David's brother, and others had received the formal thanks of the Association. Had Jackson been arraigned as well as Rowland, and had his violations of law been equally flagrant, although his jury had been equally corrupt (and it could not be worse), his conviction must have followed with equal certainty. Yet David makes no appeal. How peculiarly hard is his case; his own accomplices might have saved him by lifting a hand, and they would not do it! No preacher, not even his own brother, would say a single word in his favour. Nay, he was afraid to appear before the Conference on his own behalf. All men who have heard both sides of his "case," refuse to touch it. Still "revenge is sweet," and so he has recourse to agitation, which consists in going through the country, in search of an "unjust judge," who will "avenge him of his adversary," after hearing *one side* of the question. By bringing his talent for weeping, whining, wheedling, and wherretting, to bear on successive masses of depravity, he hopes to effect something in due time.

2.—"Men will be true to their own private ends." The *Advocate* is in want of money. He, therefore, recommends agitation, and points out the method of turning it to good account. A gentleman connected with "Morison's Pills," has recently died; and, either through sympathy for him, or some other cause, this journal has become defunct. It has, however, been revived again, in the hope of obtaining assistance from the friends of Methodist reform. True to his principle of sticking to that which is most profitable, the wonder-working "pills" are now dropped, and agitation made the subject of puffing extraordinary. October 19, he says—"No, it is not in Quarterly Meetings, but in *public meetings*, that the battle of the people against the Conference can be successfully fought." He also thinks, that in public meetings his own "battles," as well as the battles of the people, can be successfully fought, and accordingly adds—"We recommend the institution of public meetings, for the purpose of passing resolutions, and taking other appropriate measures for raising contributions to the *Christian Advocate publishing fund*." These are rather heavy tidings to the persons who have been converted into reformers by the doctrine of "stopping the supplies;" for, if the deficiencies of the law-suit—the debts of the Association—the salaries and travelling expenses of the hired agitators, are to be paid; if, beside all this, a thousand pounds is to be raised, in order to enable this son of a Methodist Preacher to blackguard his father's brethren one year longer, then, the "supplies," instead of *stopped*, must flow more copiously than before.

3.—There is another end to be attained by agitation; but whether proposed in jest or in earnest, we are really not able to say. Methodism is to be removed, in order to enable O'Connell, with his tail of popish priests, infidels, and political dissenters, to pull down the national church. The *Advocate* says—"If we have given great prominence to Wesleyan Methodist questions, it has been, because, among other reasons, we considered *Methodism, as it is*, as the grand obstacle to the triumph of religious liberty in this country; and we now tell the dissenters, that the separation of church and state will never take place till the Wesleyan Conference be *revolutionized*." Not merely reformed, but "revolutionized." All this, not that we, as a people, may be rendered more holy, happy, and useful, but that the English church may become the prey of her enemies. The members of the "Grand Central" really aspire to the honour of being pioneers to the destroyers of the Established Church.

Does it never strike them that these imaginings may possibly be more sublime than substantial? They may think themselves "singularly fitted for great actions;" but does it follow, that the Devil is of the same opinion? Is it likely that he will ever employ them in things so evidently above their capacity, as great revolutions? Is it not probable, that they will be more suitably employed in duping a few simple-hearted people, in disturbing the peace of Societies, by heading religious mobs, until the law has had time to take its course, and in raising money for needy patriots, whose highest merit consists in contracting debts which they are unable to pay?

THE "GREAT ACTIONS" OF "MEN SINGULARLY FITTED" FOR THEM, AT WHITEHAVEN AND ITS VICINITY.

The Champions for *Wesleyan* reform in this borough, "under the new act," have already rendered themselves conspicuous for their valor-

ous deeds in opposing the regularly appointed ambassadors of the cross ; and, we are sorry to find, that they continue to glory in their shame.— When men so far forget their oft-repeated profession of godliness ; and deny so flagrantly, by their works, that gospel which some of them have professed to minister, so as to become liable to the broad lash of the law, there can be but one opinion entertained, by judicious men, as to their piety as well as their sanity.

We have heard of a letter addressed, by one of the ring-leaders of this gang of reforming desperados, to a gentleman residing in Liverpool, who is, we understand, a trustee for two chapels in that vicinity, requesting his co-operation. In order to expose the spirit and objects, we give the sentiment contained in it. After enumerating and mentioning the names of those official persons who had been expelled or resigned, he requests permission to add his name to the number of those persons who are determined to oppose the preachers, agitate the Society, and take forcible possession of the chapels. The following suitable and spirited reply which was given by him, is addressed to one of the most influential friends of Wesleyan Methodism in the circuit.

“ I have heard with much regret of the proceedings at Whitehaven, by certain persons connected with the Manchester Association, a part of whom are trustees ; and, as I consider their manner of acting so contrary to propriety and common decency, I am obliged to confess I cannot approve of their proceedings ; and, in my capacity as trustee for Whitehaven and Egremont chapels, I cannot go with them in their attempts to take the above chapel by force, contrary to the Trust Deeds ; but feel it my duty to support the principle as set forth and recognised by the Trust Deeds, viz.—that we have not the option or power to do any thing contrary, it being expressly stated in them, that Conference is the only legalized body who have power to legislate and appoint the proper persons to preach in the above chapels, or whomsoever the superintendent for the time being may appoint. These being my views, I will thank you (if needful), to state the same at your trustee meeting ; as it is my determination to act in conjunction with yourself, in this serious and Christian cause.”

We have also been very opportunely favoured with the following facts, by a Whitehaven correspondent, relative to the proceedings of the Association there.

“ Whitehaven, Oct. 22, 1835.

“ We are glad indeed to read the account of Methodism in Liverpool. I see no difference here whatsoever. The Association have got the loan of Birley’s warehouse, in Duke-street, near the Independent meeting-house, which they fitted up for worship ; but, by the bye, partly with a *stolen pulpit*. A Mr. Sherwen went with two of his men, last Friday morning, before breakfast, and took the reading-desk away, which was kept above the door in our chapel. This new room was opened on Sunday, when J. Sherwen preached in the morning, as a matter of course, from “ where two or three are gathered together in my name,” &c. Basebrown preached at night : they began to sing about a quarter of an hour before we began at the chapel, in order to catch some of the congregation as they passed by. With regard to Egremont,* the chapel was kept closed till Mr. Gordon, with some others, arrived from Whitehaven with a full determination to be in the chapel, “ by hook or by crook.” As one of them was a joiner, he commenced an attack upon the window-shutter, and broke it to pieces. He then broke a square of glass out by the frame ; and another of the party, more “ singularly fitted ” for this

* Our readers must be apprised, that this is the second attempt these men have made to enter this chapel, by force. On a previous Sunday, they engaged for this purpose the services of “ a man ” most “ singularly fitted for a great action ; ” a *drunken blacksmith*, who, with the requisite tools, had been brought to force open the chapel doors ; but, on hearing the well-known voice of his principal employer, this son of Vulcan became a little more sober ; and prudently retired, without gratifying the wishes of his Sabbath-day employers by admitting them into the chapel.

part of the "great actions" than the rest, being the *ninth part of a man*, jumped up, got through the window, forced the doors open, and invited a congregation. Richard Gordon, coppersmith, was addressing them; and in the mean time, Mr. Watmough arrived. As he had to administer the sacrament, he went up to the pulpit and told R. G. that the pulpit was his, and wished him to give over. R. G. said he was a trustee; proceeded to give out a hymn; but no one could sing: so he concluded by prayer. The skeleton of his address, which was *fortunately* left behind in his haste to escape, was—1st, our grievances are universal!!—2d, we have no private pique against Mr. Watmough!!!—3d, in our expulsion, he has violated three laws!!! On Monday night, at our chapel here, they would not let the leaders meet, who were under the necessity of repairing to Mr. Watmough's house to transact their business. D. Douglas was outrageous; J. Sherwen behaved like a gentleman; Basebrowne exemplified his *native character*."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

SIR—Some years ago there was a division in the Methodist Society in Manchester, and one of the leaders became an active agent in the division. Soon after the separation was accomplished, he found that he could not have every thing his own way, because they all wanted to be masters. His head was sick, and his heart was faint; and sometime afterwards he requested permission to return to the Old Connexion. He was received, but he never lifted up his head again among his brethren with confidence. God had forgiven him, but he would never forgive himself. To a friend he said, "Oh sir, I was instrumental in taking away two or three hundred souls, and I could not keep them together, they were, therefore, turned adrift, and many of them got into the world; and when I think on these souls my heart is almost fit to break, and I shall never forgive myself!"

When he was taken ill, one of the Manchester Preachers visited him; the blood of souls was still in his skirts, and he sunk deeper and deeper into despondency. The last time the preacher saw him, he was apparently just entering the eternal world, and under a cloud of dark despair. His family were all standing around his bed; tears ran down their cheeks, and they were deeply affected at the thought of their father dying in such a state of mind. The Preacher conversed with him, and prayed for him, but the heavens were as brass, and it seemed as if God had shut up his bowels of tender mercy against him. In that awful state he continued till near midnight, when one glimmering ray of light darted into his mind. The comfort increased, and the next day he passed into eternity.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications have been received from "Urbane,"—"Delta,"—"Gulielmus,"—"A Whitehaven Methodist,"—"A Trustee of two chapels in the Whitehaven Circuit,"—"S."—"A Lover of Methodism," and also from Prescott. Our London correspondent has our best thanks: his communications are always desirable. We request a continuation.

We trust that the sacramental service, belonging to a certain chapel, not ten miles from Liverpool, which is at present unjustly retained by a person who has no right to it, will be immediately restored to the proper authorities; or we must, in our capacity of Illuminators, throw light on the affair. We spare the parties for the present—hoping "*verbum sat sapienti*."

Nos. 1 to 20 of the *Illuminator* may be obtained from Mr. Mason, through any respectable bookseller.

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED.

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION ;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES ; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY ; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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AN APPEAL TO THE WESLEYAN SOCIETIES,
IN REFUTATION OF THE MISREPRESENTATIONS OF "AN APPEAL TO THE BRITISH
PUBLIC, ON THE PRIESTLY AND POLITICAL POWER OF THE CONFERENCE."

BRETHREN—An appeal having been published in many of the London papers, and also in other periodicals, entitled, "An Appeal to the British public against the priestly and political power of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference," bringing many grave and serious allegations against the Body to which you belong, we take the liberty to address you on the subject.

The opening paragraph of this "*Appeal*" assumes, that the avowed purposes of your communion is a deception on the British public: "Very few are aware of what Wesleyan Methodism actually is. It has hitherto been looked upon, for the most part, as an extraordinary means employed by the providence of God in the spread of truth and holiness amongst the poor, the wicked, and the wretched of our home population, and has been acknowledged, accordingly, as a branch of Christ's church here upon earth, the efforts of which he has been pleased signally to bless and prosper." You will perceive from the manner in which the subject is stated, that a doubt is now intended to be thrown on the truth of these opinions entertained respecting that system of religion which you profess. If the Association question whether Wesleyan Methodism has been "an extraordinary means employed by the providence of God in the spread of truth and holiness," you can have no hesitation on the subject. Although these parties may affect to doubt whether the great Head of the Church has employed Methodism in its career of success. We only know of two unseen spiritual influences—the one providential, and the other diabolical ; and if the effects produced by Methodism cannot be classed with the former, they of necessity belong to the latter. Have "truth and holiness" been extended through the country, and, we may add, other parts of the world ? If so, we should imagine, that the "*father of lies*" would, neither by his own direct influence, or by the agency of his emissaries, perform this good work. These parties do not say, indeed, that "*truth and holiness*" have not been promoted amongst the poor of this country;

but, although they do not affirm it for themselves, they evidently, to gain some ulterior end, and rouse the public to aid them in their revolutionary movements, wish to insinuate and excite doubts on the subject in their minds. Mark, brethren, the Appeal is not made to you, on the subject of a providential designation and employment of Methodism to extend truth and holiness, who are the proper and legitimate judges on the matter; but to the British public. Is there not enough of doubt and infidelity in the public mind already on religious subjects? Do not the periodical press and the ephemeral publications of the age supply sufficient nutriment to the scepticism, so rife and fashionable amongst us? Is not the transfer from a philosophical, metaphysical, and erudite unbelief, to a fierce and deadly hatred of the name, forms, and institutions of religion, sufficiently powerful?—It seems not; for the leaders of the Association now drag Methodism into the arena of strife; and their very first words are an attempt to impress the public with the belief, that they have been deceived in supposing it to be an instrument of providence. They could have no doubt themselves, except they doubt whether it was providence which brought them within the light of truth and the influence of Christian holiness, for they know that they owe to Wesleyan agency all the knowledge of religion which they have attained, and all the experience of its comforts and purity they have enjoyed. And, also, being aware that you possess an evidence, clear as the light of heaven, in your own knowledge and enjoyments, that Wesleyan Methodism is a work of God, they did not dare to insinuate any suspicion into your minds; but with great adroitness carry the question out into the world, and invite persons who, they are aware, are already predisposed to question the truth of all religion, to add to their stock of unbelief and hatred, by lampooning Methodism, as a system of deceit and hypocrisy. We ask, can any conduct be imagined more abhorrent to everything honest and holy than this? When a cowardly Italian wishes to despatch his enemy, he usually hires a wretched bandit to assassinate him in the dark; and, in like manner, these gentlemen, not choosing boldly and broadly to assert and maintain themselves, that the Connexion to which they once belonged is not a true Christian church, raised up by providence to spread “truth and holiness,” put the doubt into the minds of others, and, then, giving them the clue to the chase, call up the blood-hounds of infidelity and anarchy to join in hunting down Methodism as an ungodly “*usurpation*.” The call has already been obeyed by certain portions of the public press; and now the character of the work of God is placed before that tribunal, which, as a first principle, scorns all religion.

“Very few are aware of what Wesleyan Methodism actually is.” How so? In another part of this Appeal it is asserted that a million of persons belong to the classes and attend the worship. Do not these persons know what it is?—Oh, no: it is elegantly said of you, our beloved brethren, that you are a “beguiled and beblinded” race. It so happens that some of you are blessed with a liberal education—belong to the learned professions—are well acquainted with general knowledge—are read in the science of law, government, and ecclesiastical history; others of you are gentlemen of large commercial dealings—have enjoyed long and large experience in the world—have moved in general society with discriminating attention, and manifested for a long series of years, in all states of the world, more than an average share of judgment and prudence; and the most common class amongst you are persons enjoying human faculties—are well acquainted with your Bible and the general subjects

of religious truth, as well as possessed of that fine shrewdness and common sense which is so characteristic of vast masses of the working classes of this country; and yet it is here asserted in your presence, and before the British public, that you are so "*beblinded*" as not to be aware of the nature of the religion you profess. You will have the kindness to mark the difference between yourselves and the Preachers; they are the *rogues*, and you are the *fools*. Then we ask you, whether you are, or are not, so besotted as not to comprehend the principles and nature of the system of religion you profess? Mark, this is the opinion entertained of you by the Association; it is not ours. On the other hand, we believe you have examined the foundations of your faith—the principles of the economy under which you choose voluntarily to live—are convinced of the truth, and, despite of the semi-infidel contempt of these Associationists, of the divine origin and providential designation of Methodism, and that the religion you have professed, and long enjoyed, you know to be no "cunningly devised fable." Moreover, we consider you to be men of competent understanding to judge of truth, of honesty in following your convictions, and you would not surely, for the sake of pampering a proud priesthood, and supporting a form of religion which infringed upon your freedom, forfeit your rights as English citizens. This is our opinion of your character and independence; and although, in a truly Christian and British spirit, you allow the rights of others, whilst you claim your own, yet, you are not the men to bow to a vile "*usurpation*." To you belongs, if we do not greatly mistake your feelings, the desire to allow and respect the scriptural office of the Ministry, as well as to assert and maintain your own freedom as Christians. And, unlike the deeply prejudiced parties now agitating the Body, you have discernment sufficient to perceive, that to uphold the due and proper functions of the pastoral office, in fact, is to augment your own respectability—the comfort and probable Christian edification of your children and families, as well as to promote the moral influence and efficiency of our general Christianity. The agitators consider this folly, and represent you as "*beblinded*" for entertaining these sentiments, and acting on the honest convictions of your mind.—Time, and eternity too, will settle the question, which are the wise, and which the mistaken men. When these anarchists lie prostrate beneath the ruins, occasioned by their own intemperate zeal—as Samson in the ruins of the temple—you, we verily believe, will find yourselves, and your children after you, in a temple of truth and religion—firm in its foundations—majestic in its aspect—edifying in its services, and giving utterance to the oracles of sacred truth.

It is next insinuated that the objects proposed, and the fellowship established, by Mr. Wesley, have not merely been lost sight of, but other principles have been adopted by his successors in the Ministry. That he established a Catholic and edifying communion, and that, on this foundation, the Conference has reared a vile "*usurpation*." "Men of all sentiments," it is said, "religious and political were his brethren and allies, if, with him, they strove to flee from the wrath to come, and to lay hold on endless life; to save their own souls, whilst they were instrumental in assisting others also to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. This was the great, the only bond of his confederated or 'United Societies,' and, 'himself a churchman (as to its doctrine and discipline generally), *he applied himself to the reformation of mankind*, according to the light and help which God was pleased to afford; determined, in the mean time, to know no man after the flesh;

but thankfully to avail himself of the aid of all, and never to rest until the heavenly character of the church of Christ should be seen and acknowledged, and every thing worldly and unholy out of the way." This statement, it must be again recollected, is made to the British public, and not to you our brethren. Inuendo is again employed, and nothing positively affirmed. The design is most clear, namely, to insinuate to the people who have no means of setting themselves right, that the primary principles, rules, and objects, proposed by Mr. Wesley, have been abandoned by modern practice.

Do not "men of all sentiments, religious and political," live in alliance with the Methodist Societies at present, "if they strive to flee from the wrath to come?" You who are the Members of these Societies can reply to this. You know that the Rules of the "*United Societies*," which were framed and published by the two Wesleys, nearly a century ago, remain unaltered to the present day; and that these very regulations were placed in your hands when you entered the Society. That no new or altered test has ever been adopted; and, instead of requiring adherence to a new creed, it is now only necessary that Members of Society, have a "desire to flee from the wrath to come," without any subscription to "speculative doctrine" at all. In addition to this, no avowal of opinion on points of church government, is ever required; some of you are, in principle, favourable to the Episcopal model, and others to the Independent; and the only requirement expected is, that all parties will agree to live in peace with their brethren. The catholicity of the communion has never been narrowed, and such an attempt has never been made from the moment of Mr. Wesley's death to the present period. Then what can this insinuation mean, but to injure the Connexion in public estimation; and, through the agency of the newspapers, spread the notion through the nation, that the Wesleyan Societies are founded on some narrow, illiberal, and sectarian principles; and demanding subscription to articles of faith, or submission in practise, such as were never required in the time of their great founder. You know, as well as we do, that this is most false and calumnious; and, also, that in all the proceedings of the Body, the most friendly and fraternal feeling has been cherished, and, especially, in modern times, with all orthodox Christians. For several years past, up to the present dreadful confusion, have not the Wesleyan Ministers and other bodies of officers, actually sought an interchange of kind offices amongst all parties? A dissenting Minister has generally been engaged at the great London Missionary Anniversaries, and in the principal country Auxiliaries, and even village Societies, this has, as often as possible, been done. Where, then, is the proof of unfaithfulness towards you, the Members of Society, or of the indulgence of a less catholic spirit than in times of yore? The truth is, that there has been a growing improvement in the Connexion, in all these respects; and, as the Association choose to appeal to the British public, for the purpose of insinuating their injurious slanders; through you, we make our appeal to the same parties, and tell them most unhesitatingly that, instead of the Wesleyan Connexion being less, it is much more bland and catholic in its spirit.

But men of all sentiments, "*political*," as well as religious, it is said, were the allies of Mr. Wesley. This is evidently affirmed, in order to insinuate that men of all political opinions, are not now, the allies of the Wesleyan Connexion; but that some political dogmas are made the condition of church communion. You, who are our brother Methodists, know best whether this is true or false. Many of you are now in possession, like the rest of your countrymen, of the elective franchise, and it is known to yourselves how you use it. Do you all vote one way, or, are you led to the hustings like a band of Romanists, by a Methodist priest? Has the Conference issued its manifesto, ordering you, on pain of damnation, to give your suffrages in favour of some favourite political opinions? You know the opposite of this to be the case, and that your freedom of choice has never been, directly, or indirectly, interfered with, and also that the Wesleyan Conference has never on any occasion, or at any time, propounded any political creed. Like other persons, the Wesleyan Preachers entertain certain opinions on these questions, but as far as our knowledge goes, they are just as diversified as those of other men, with the exception, perhaps, that they are rarely held in the extreme on either side. But it is not against individual opinion, but the public sentiment of the Conference, that this calumny is levelled. It so happens, however, that this body, never went further than an address to the throne, on some public occasion; and, in no instance, interfered in any purely political question whatever. We believe if the subject were gone into, but we have no desire to enter into it at all, it would be found, that, on all the great

questions now agitating the public mind, your suffrages would be found marshalled on different sides—a proof of the exercise of free and independent thought and judgment. In our conscience, we believe that the cause of offence to this junto of agitators, is, not that the Methodist Conference and the great body of the best informed friends, *is a political body*, but that it *is not*; and, consequently, refuses to lend itself to their reforming projects.

Hence, they put the following words in italics.—“*He*” (Mr. Wesley) “*applied himself to the reformation of mankind.*”—And pray to what do the Wesleyan Preachers now apply themselves, but the “reformation of mankind?”—But is the reformation of men that to which these parties refer? Do they not rather use this term for another purpose, viz.—as a catch word, with the intention to enlist the reformers on their side? We believe this is their drift. It is intended to be *affirmed*, that Mr. Wesley was a reformer; and *insinuated* that the Conference are not favourable to his views in this respect. We believe this to be a groundless insinuation; and that the accused parties are as much in favour of the reform of mankind as Mr. Wesley himself. But why use this term in reference to the spiritual work undertaken by this great man? His object was much higher than is meant by this expression. It was the *salvation* of mankind. He employed the whole period of his eventful life, in calling sinners to repentance, leading them to the faith of Christ, teaching the doctrine of the new birth, and training as many as he could bring under his influence, in the paths of Christian holiness. He rarely interfered in the business of secular politics—the thing, we believe, to which this marked expression refers; but, when he did, it was in direct opposition to the views and proceedings of the disaffected and revolutionary spirit of his day. We express no opinion on the desire for change, now so prevalent in this country; but we take leave to remind you, that, at one time in Mr. Wesley’s day, the rage for reform was, perhaps, as rife as at present. We refer to the American controversy. And how did Mr. Wesley act on that occasion? Did he take sides with the republican movement against the mother country and the English constitution? No; he espoused the opposite side, and spoke often and largely against the revolutionary spirit; and, moreover, published an address to the revolted Colonies in vindication of the constitutional rights of England;—consequently, if Methodist Preachers should feel it to be their duty to oppose revolution now, they would be countenanced by the example of their great founder. But it is not true, that they, as a body, have ever opposed reform, or taken any active part in the questions which continue to agitate the country. They consider their calling to be purely spiritual; and, because they refuse to join in the debates and movements of the day, on the one side or the other, are they to be held up to public odium, as the enemies of liberty and the rights of mankind? Their sole, and we may say, their only, business is, if the term is to be retained, the reformation of mankind. Let their labours and successes in the most destitute and neglected parts of this nation—their unparalleled sufferings and triumphs among the negroes of the West Indies, as well as their expensive and costly Missionary establishments in other parts of the world, bear testimony to this fact. Their object, indeed, is much higher than the reformation of mankind by changes of secular government. They leave that to those whom it may concern; their business is with the souls of men. To communicate saving knowledge—to proclaim the cross of Christ—to lead men into the Christian faith—to communicate spiritual advice and consolation—to bring them into a converted and holy state—and instrumentally to train them for the kingdom of God, they consider their vocation, and they cannot “come down” to “wallow in the mire” of secular politics. To do so would, no doubt, call forth the plaudits and hearty greetings of such men as now compose the majority of the Association, and some few who still remain in the Societies; but it would excite the indignation of the intelligent, the spiritually minded, and the peaceful of their own people. We put it to you, our beloved brethren, whether you would entertain the same regard and affection for your Ministers as you now do, if you alternately heard them on the hustings of some popular meeting, haranguing a crowd on some topic of excitable public interest; and, then, on the return of the Sabbath, addressing you on the solemn subjects of religion and eternity. We are persuaded, be your creed what it may on these points of dispute, you approve of the non-interference of those to whom you have to listen in the house and sanctuary of God.

In connexion with the last insinuation stands a series of most fearful charges, boldly and unequivocally stated. To prevent confusion and to bring the matters contained in these charges as clearly before your attention as possible, we shall endeavour to analyse and classify them in the best way in our power.

1.—We have an attempt to identify the Wesleyan Connexion with the Papacy.

The inventive faculty possessed by the Association, has at length led them to find the symbol of Methodism in one of the Beasts of the Apocalypse, whilst the application is furnished by Mr. Wesley himself: “In one short sentence he has left upon record the full and settled judgment of his enlightened mind upon this fundamental sub-

ject, on which also he uniformly acted throughout the whole course of his truly apostolical career; and, instead of crowding together a variety of quotations, all of them to the same point, we shall rehearse these memorable words, written as if for these very times—spoken as if by a spirit of prophecy, to mark out the doom, and betoken the downfall of the USURPATION that has subsequently been built upon the scriptural foundation which he was chosen of God to lay in this benighted land. 'THE BEAST IS A SPIRITUAL SECULAR POWER, OPPOSITE TO THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST; A POWER NOT MERELY SPIRITUAL OR ECCLESIASTICAL, NOR MERELY SECULAR AND POLITICAL, BUT A MIXTURE OF BOTH.'"

We have very naturally turned to Mr. Wesley's account of the Beast, in his Notes on Rev. xiii. 1. He there states—"This Beast is the Romish Papacy, as it came to a point six hundred years since, stands now, and will for some time longer. To this and no other power on earth agrees the whole text, and every part of it in every point; as we may see, with the utmost evidence, from the propositions following." We have then a string of eight PROPOSITIONS, and twenty-two OBSERVATIONS, in proof that this Beast must be the Papacy, and it can apply to no other power on earth. One or two points may be worth a moment's notice, as regards the origin and attributes of the Beast, and that which this Appeal calls the *usurpation*. This usurpation, it is stated in the Appeal, "has subsequently been built upon the scriptural foundation which he was chosen of God to lay in this benighted land." We are thankful to be informed by this Appeal that Methodism, after all, has been built on a scriptural foundation. How a religious system built on a scriptural foundation can be identified with popery, and be proved an *usurpation*, we are at a loss to conceive; and this writer does not deign to tell us. And does the papacy which Mr. Wesley says is meant by the Beast rest on a scriptural foundation? All the world knows that it has in every age been the object of popery to proscribe the scriptures, and deny the laity the right of reading them; whilst, in their absence, they have, with infinite cunning, founded a system of ecclesiastical polity which has effectually removed the "Apostles and Prophets together with Jesus Christ, the chief corner stone," from their scriptural position as the foundation of the Christian church. Has Methodism ever done this? Is not the Bible possessed by every one, and all the doctrines, disciplinary regulations, public ministry, and, in a word, the entire economy placed under the inspection and moral controul of the whole Body of people, as stated by the authority of scripture? Besides, Mr. Wesley's papal Beast, he tells us, had *seven heads and ten horns*; he is a secular prince: for a crown, yea, a kingdom, are ascribed to him—has a strict connexion with the city of Rome, and that it rose out of the sea. These are some of the qualities and attributes of the Beast. Does the "*usurpation*" agree to this description? It would be folly in us to make any remarks on this distorted analogy; but we do take the liberty to remind the Association that the Appeal comes at a time very unsuitable to their views. The parties they intend to influence and call to their aid, are in no position to give their assistance to demolish Methodism, because it is like popery. Their Appeal, no doubt, being addressed to the British public, is intended for the *liberal* part of that public; in what attitude does this party stand to popery just at this time? By a strange combination of events, these two classes, the liberals and papists, have become cousin-germans; and have been complimenting and caressing each other in the most endearing manner.—Most assuredly the Association has missed its mark here: we shall have all the *liberals* on our side, if they can make out a case of identity for us with popery. Only let them prove that our religion is just like the religion of O'Connell, and then we are safe enough. In admiration of popery these gentlemen have fraternized with its chief supporter, patronised his schemes for rendering it dominant in Ireland, done his will and pleasure in banishing the Bible and establishing a popish system of education; and, in return, have received his advocacy and support. The radicals are become the patrons of popery, and papists the props of radicalism. If the Appeal is intended for O'Connell and his party, it must fail, because they will feel themselves bound in consistency to support that which is most identical with their own profession; and the noble argument in proof that Methodism is the *fac-simile* of the "*guilty*" Beast, will cause them, of course, to hail the approximation with joy, and the "*mother of harlots*" will receive the daughter to her embrace with rapturous delight. But if, on the other hand, the Appeal is not intended for the papists, but for the infidels, the socinians, and the low political dissenters, and that numerous class of the "British public," which, having no religion, are free to take any side; even the attempt must fail here, because all these parties are bound in the silken cords of the most endearing sympathy to each other, and all to O'Connell and popery. Then we remind you, our friends and fellow-christians of the Societies, that when you see yourselves represented as one of the Beasts, you need be under no apprehension that any parties will come forward to hunt the wild animal. The horn of the Association will call forth no dogs to the

chase ; except, for the want of other employment, a certain portion of the public press should deem it within the legitimate functions of their *liberal* lucubrations, with one hand to support O'Connell and popery, and with the other to pull down and destroy its counterpart and image. The *Courier* has already made a flourish of trumpets ; but it is not a sound that need frighten any of the adherents of our cause.

2.—It is next attempted to show that the Wesleyan communion is “*a spiritually secular power*” in the land, and that it is the design of the Conference so to maintain it. As this affirmation relates to the organization of the Connexion, as distinct from its operations, we beg to call your attention to the case. If it were true that the Wesleyan Body was founded on “*a spiritually secular*” principle ; and, according to the evident meaning intended to be conveyed, assumed the religious name and garb for merely worldly purposes, then we should say, most certainly, that such an economy was of a most dangerous tendency. As to the formation of the Conference, the settlement of chapels, the rules of Society, the duties and rights of Ministers, the character and functions of local meetings, and, indeed, the entire scheme and constitution of the Societies, they are all published and open to the inspection of the world. We ask the Members whether, in the station they occupy, with a perfect knowledge of the internal working of the system as well as its prescriptive code, they discover any double purpose ? We inquire, are you practised upon through the medium of your religious profession, to unite with others in the promotion of some secular scheme ? Are any subjects proposed to you in your classes, your society meetings, your leaders', quarterly, and other meetings, on the question of worldly politics ; or your suffrages sought in favour of some one class of opinions to the exclusion of others ? Have you, in your intercourse with your Preachers, by hint, inuendo, and other modes of conveying thought, in an indirect way, found that, under the cloak of religion, they were, in fact, seeking to gain you over to some worldly scheme ? Many of you have, for many years, been in the habit of listening to the discourses of these men of craft and deceit ; and if they had been in the habit of making known any design such as is intimated, “*beblinded*” as you are, your eyes would surely have been opened sufficiently at some time to detect the cheat. No ; you know that the one great object proposed by this system is to seek your salvation. Besides, if that British public, to which this Appeal is now made, will exercise a sober and dispassionate judgment, they will be easily able to detect the fallacy of this representation. Not being under the influence of the blinding dogmas of Methodism, they are in circumstances to know whether it infringes on their liberties and rights. Has the Wesleyan Body ever interfered, directly or indirectly, with the immunities and privileges of their fellow subjects ? Do the places in which they have succeeded in forming their establishments meet with insufferable encroachments and annoyance from the operations, secret or open, of this system ? Are we imitating our fellow papists in Ireland, in the employment of death's heads and cross bones, in thundering maledictions from our altars on all heretics, in refusing to hold dealings in trade with our fellow countrymen, and, by every mode of intimidation and expression, rendering life and property insecure ? This is, no doubt, the mode in which that “*spiritually secular*” power described by Mr. Wesley, even now works ; do his followers imitate the example and fill up the horrid picture ? Brethren, this is what is affirmed respecting you, and we are persuaded, if you do not spurn the charge with indignation, you will calmly roll the slander from yourselves, by the power of conscious innocence, upon the heads of the men who have had the daring hardihood to make it.

3.—The working of the system of Methodism is next represented as dangerous to the liberties of the nation and of mankind. It exerts itself “to rival, to outstrip, and then to cast under, all other modes and forms of faith whatever. They have for near half a century been underworking the rights and freedoms of mankind ; the same outside show of doctrine and discipline which their father left them being uniformly presented to the beguiled and beblinded eye of their unsuspecting adherents. The last meshes of their net have been knotted, and upwards of one million of our fellow-countrymen—of their classes and congregations, in Great Britain alone—now find themselves enclosed within the toils of an ecclesiastical economy which asserts the *divine right* of an irresponsible priesthood to legislate in all matters of doctrine, whilst it maintains the *legal right* of ONE HUNDRED self-chosen elders of that priesthood to have and to hold, to open and to shut, several thousand houses of worship ; all raised by voluntary subscription, for the religious instruction and benefit of the respective neighbourhoods in which they have been built.”

In this charge, you, and the Wesleyan Ministers are represented as outstripping and casting under, all other modes and forms of faith ; and, consequently, as endangering the right of private judgment and freedom of religious worship. The other Christian denominations are judges of this, as well as yourselves. If such encroachments

are made upon their unquestionable rights, as is here stated, it is a marvellous thing that they do not defend themselves from the aggression. When it is said we "*outstrip*" many of the Christian Bodies of this country, you, like ourselves, will, we are certain, receive this as information. Our notion of our position in the race is, that we are lagging in the rear of some of our competitors; and as to casting their forms of faith under us, they enjoy, like ourselves, perfect freedom of conscience. What is it that malice cannot invent and assert? But there is one admission here which we are surprised the united cunning and duplicity of the Association did not keep back. It is, that the "*same outside show of doctrine and discipline which their father left them is uniformly presented*" to the "*people*." Is this true? The same parties have affirmed the contrary, especially as respects discipline, a thousand times over. It now comes out that the Wesleyan Ministers do preach and administer the same doctrine and discipline as their father in the gospel. But in order to fix a stigma of reproach on these parties, it is assumed that there are two sides to this system, and only one is exhibited to the people. Now, the "*outside*" doctrines proclaimed by the Methodist Preachers are, the deity and atonement of Christ—the personality, divinity, and influences of the Holy Spirit—the universal corruption and sin of man—justification by faith alone—the necessity and practicability of regeneration—together with all the moral duties and obligations taught in the word of God. As it seems there is an *inside* to these doctrines, as well as an outside one, we should like to know what it may be. Perhaps, by the time the Association favours the world with another Appeal, they will have fathomed the interior mystery of these doctrines, and will inform us what it is that the wily system of Methodism contains in its *inner temple*, and what the *faces* of the unseen side of their doctrines may be. Then as to discipline, it is said, the *outside* is the same as that left by their father, only the rogues happen to have an *inside* as well. Now, as the discipline of the Connexion relates to the whole of its economical state—such as the rules on which the Society is formed and governed—will these gentlemen inform us what the difference may be betwixt the inside and outside of one of these rules. To such a wretched subterfuge are these men driven, as to make a distinction where none can possibly exist, for the sake of bolstering up their cause. How can truth be divisible? The Wesleyan Ministers either do or do not preach the doctrines and administer the discipline of their great founder. We have now the testimony of the Association itself that they do so outwardly. Pray is there any other mode of doing it? We know of none?

Next it is said, that through the instrumentality of something behind the scene, "they have for near half a century been 'underworking the rights and freedoms of mankind.'" And, again,—"*Of the real state of things in this Body, the country at large has but little knowledge; nor are our fellow-countrymen at all aware of the dangers with which they, in common with ourselves, are menaced by these overt acts of an ecclesiastical tyranny. The concentration, the organization, the secrecy, the care with which, at the nod of one man, the most complicated, yet most efficient machinery in the world, is now brought to bear upon the people of England, as one means of checking the progress of salutary reforms; and, under the mask of religion, at home, and missions abroad, of overstepping all other churches, and, upon their ruins, causing a second grisly papacy to arise; these religious and political features of Wesleyan Methodism, as at present administered, are now declaring themselves in a way that, unhappily, leaves no room for doubt; whilst it must fill the minds of the generous philanthropist with serious apprehension, if not dismay.*"—The first figure is taken from some subterranean animal, a mole, or a rat; and, like these mischievous creatures, the friends and adherents of Wesleyan Methodism have been burrowing underground, to sap the foundations of British freedom, and lay the noble structure of constitutional liberty, like a fortress or castle, in the dust. If this has been their occupation for so great a length of time, and, withal, they are so numerous and dexterous as they are represented to be, one would imagine some progress would have been made by this time; and the liberties of mankind would have been retrograding at a rapid rate. Surely one battlement of the noble temple of English liberty might have been brought down, and a breach made by which these foes of freedom might march boldly in, storm the whole, and build their own fabric of tyranny and popery on the ruins. Now, we ask you, and, indeed, the British public, whether the freedom of mankind has waned during the period of the existence and operations of Wesleyan Methodism? That epoch will be considered by future historians as one of the most important in the annals of the world; and, if the great moral and political movement which has taken place, is not ruined and despoiled of its glories by another kind of Beast than Wesleyan Methodism;—we mean, the tyranny and despotism of radicalism, religious and political;—it will be referred to as the most favourable to freedom which ever dawned on the human race. What impediment has Methodism ever thrown in the way of the liberties

of mankind? Indirectly, she has done more to advance national freedom in connection with religion and public virtue, than any other section of the church; simply because she has done more to extend the elements of all real freedom—the knowledge of truth, and the blessings of Christianity. To her has been given the glory of sowing the seeds of the last great revival of religion; of rousing the mind of the nation and of the world from its lethargy; of putting in motion those great scriptural means and doctrines which have awakened the moral and mental faculties of mankind; of raising the poor of this and other countries into the condition of thinking, intelligent, and respectable citizens; of putting on foot various means to promote general education; of publishing a plain and cheap literature, for the instruction of the population at large; and, by these causes, the nation, and other portions of mankind, have advanced, by infinite degrees, in their civil condition and the amount of their freedom. We shall be accounted egotists; but, be it so: our firm conviction is, that the very cause which is now said to be dangerous to the liberties of the world, has done more to advance them than any other agency and influence in existence.—But it happens in this case, as in many cases besides, that one generation and class of men labour, and others enter into their labours and reap the fruit. Who, we ask, gave to the working classes of this country that moral and religious knowledge which fitted them for the enlarged franchises which have been conferred upon them? Who toiled and died amongst the Negro race to teach them religion and prepare them for emancipation? Not, we reply, the statesmen who have legislated on these subjects, and who now wear the laurels of these great triumphs. That system of Methodism which is now the object of so many malignant attacks has done more than any other agency on earth to advance and promote this great cause. With strutting importance the radical demagogues and reformers now walk over the field of English and West Indian advanced civilization and freedom, cleared of brambles and brush-wood, and planted with the tree of knowledge and flowers of piety, by the long and incessant labours of Wesleyan and other teachers of religion, and now in lofty and pompous strains, exclaim, in the spirit of the monarch of “Babylon,” is not this the work of our hands! It is no more the work of their hands than registering the battles, and writing the life of the illustrious conqueror of Napoleon, constitutes the science, the skill, the bravery, and the patriotism, by which a hundred battles were won—the honour of England raised to the highest elevation in the sight of the world—the enemies of our country repressed in their maddening career, and the liberties of the nation secured against the most dangerous combination ever formed against their existence. The despicable faction of petty despots now constituting the “Grand Central,” the friends and advocates of liberty indeed! The spirit of radicalism, whether civil or religious, is a spirit of un-mixed tyranny. It moves on the plan of destroying every order but its own, that it may reign rampant over the liberties and destinies of every thing brought under its influence. We know not what providence may permit, either in the nation or in our own Connexion; but if, in either case, this evil genius should be allowed to gain the ascendant, we know the entire prostration of freedom in the nation must follow, and as regards our Body, it would become a mere instrument to serve the ambitious designs of these politico-religious democrats.

We have now the right so to designate them, for in this Appeal they unequivocally fraternize with this party, and call on them to come to their aid, to succour them in their distress, and overthrow Wesleyan Methodism. A more cunning and infamous attempt was never devised by the wickedness of man. The usual topics of declamation are resorted to, and the British public are unblushingly told, that the Wesleyan system is operating to the danger of their freedom, and the obstruction of salutary *municipal* and *national* reforms. At the moment, and in the town, we are writing this article, an active canvass is going on for the election of councillors under the new municipal act; and the whole population of the town know that some of the friends and members of the Wesleyan Society are taking part on one side, and some on the other. Not however as Members of Society, or as patronized, advised, or supported by it in any way whatever; but simply as Englishmen and part of the great body politic. We defy the Association to prove that the Wesleyan Body, in that capacity—by its Conference, by its circuit-meetings, or by any private union of its members—ever interfered to controul an election for a member of parliament, with one only exception—the slavery question; or concentrated their strength to controul the municipal, or any other public interests of corporation or town. And as these gentlemen do not appear to comprehend the principle on which Wesleyans do act, we tell them, it is, amongst other things, the love of true and real freedom which causes them so to abstain from a united co-operation in politics. We know classes of religious persons who are all of one mind on these questions—who congregate and unite to carry their favourite views, and if poll-books were examined, would be found as nearly as possible to have voted all on

one side. This may be called a love of, and the support of freedom; it is bigotted, sectarian, anti-national, and slavish subjection of soul and feeling to petty and party views and interests. To this the agitators of the Wesleyan Societies desire to reduce you, our brethren. We interfere not with your creeds and opinions, but we invite you to behold the noble attitude of real freedom in which you stand, compared with the pitiful tools of party faction; and we humbly, but fervently, conjure you to keep your position, and never allow yourselves to become the blind adherents of any party.

4.—The Association have the candour to tell the British public, that they are at present only in pursuit of truth and freedom; and, consequently, they have no certainty as to the principles they hold or may finally adopt. "*To find out what is the freedom wherewith Christ has made his people free, and then, having attained unto the truth of God, (whether Wesley, or Calvin, or Luther may have aided us in our search after it), to hand down the clustering blessings that grow out of it to our children after us—this great idea* has led to the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Association." It appears from this, then, that these parties are quite afloat, even as regards first principles. They are only attempting to find out the freedom of the gospel, and the truth of God, and do not know which may aid them most, Wesley, Calvin, or Luther! It follows that they have no knowledge whatever to what point of the compass they may be led. The want of space prevents us following out this as we could wish; but we hope our own people, who are devoted to Wesleyan Methodism on principle, will have the kindness to mark this confession. A set of men unite in a body with a professed view to reform the Society; and yet, now, after more than twelve months' agitation, they come forward and tell us, they are only in search of the truth, and have no settled views at all. We knew this to be the fact long ago; but it comes much better from themselves than from us. Now the Members of Society are made aware, on the avowals of the Association, that they do not know to what they shall ultimately conduct them. They may make themselves a Calvinistic, or a Lutheran, or—they know not what communion. They are in search after the liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free, and the truth of God; and the means they employ are such as the present Appeal, organized agitation, public meetings for declamation, and the whirlpool of passion, prejudice, and scandal. Whether truth and freedom will be found in such quarters, and by such means, time will show.

5.—Finally, this Appeal is a loud call for aid and co-operation on the part of persons of all parties and creeds:—

"We call, then, most earnestly upon the free press, metropolitan and provincial, to afford their powerful assistance in disabusing the mind of the public, who know little or nothing comparatively of the real state of this hierarchy; we invite the notice of all parties of politicians to the existence of a priestly power, that is ready for the time and to the seeming, to coalesce with any, whilst it is silently working its way over them all, and above them all, and to the destruction of them all. We solicit the assistance, pecuniary and every other, of the friends of truth and liberty—the wise—the great—the good of all parties, who are bound to none, but God only, to enable us to carry to successful termination, a work which we have undertaken, not with any private aim, but for the public good; and in which we are resolved never to slacken, whatever the sacrifice we may be called upon personally to make, until having brought the subject before the whole British public in its courts of law and of equity, and of supreme legislation, and, lastly, before its most awful and all-determining tribunal—the tribunal of public opinion—it be seen *what the truth is, and whether that truth shall stand or fall.*"

Whether this call will be obeyed, time must determine. We wish our friends to remark that this is what the Association consider liberty! They call upon the British public to come forward in any way they may think proper—by periodical attacks in the papers—pecuniary contributions, as well as counsel and co-operation—to aid them in breaking up our Connexion, or subduing it to their own views and authority. It is, they say, their intention to appeal to "*the courts of law and equity,*" to the "*supreme legislation,*" and to "*the tribunal of public opinion.*" We thought they had appealed to the courts of law, and the tribunal of public opinion, already. One other resource remains for them—the supreme legislature. Let them go to Parliament, if they can find a member insane enough to advocate their views. Let them get a committee, or a commission, if they can; we are perfectly willing to submit our entire economy, government, objects, and proceedings to the inspection of the legislature. Indeed, our documents will afford full information, without such a supervision. Methodism is not a secret confederacy; it is open to the knowledge of all men; and, when the day of trial shall come, if sought and granted, it will be found that her constitution is one of the most useful systems of pious co-operation for doing good, which the providence of God ever gave to the world. In the mean time, we tell the Association, and know that we echo the sentiment of the great majority of the Wesleyan Societies, that, with whatever firmness and perseverance they determine to pursue their objects, they will be met by equal decision; that, if they can succeed in calling forth the assistance of the infidelity and radicalism of the nation, to hunt down the Wesleyan Societies, they will be met in calm defiance, with such weapons as truth and religion furnish; and,

resting on the palladium of British rights and freedom, as well as the glorious principles of Methodism, their tyranny will be resisted to the last extremity; and the liberties of the followers of John Wesley maintained against one of the most horrid forms of despotism that ever disgraced the Christian name.

THE NEW CONNEXION AND ITS CREED.

We have a sincere and growing attachment to Methodist theology, as it is contained in the Rev. John Wesley's first four volumes of Sermons and Notes on the New Testament. The more we search the Scriptures, the deeper is our conviction, that the doctrines which the above works explain and defend, are in strict accordance with the mind of God. In whatsoever part of the world they are simply and faithfully proclaimed, a blessing attends them to the souls of men. By such a ministration, accompanied with the Divine presence, the Methodists of former days have been made a thousand times as many more as they were. For these, among other reasons, we cordially and fervently love "the form of sound words delivered unto us;" and we are exceedingly wishful that it may be transmitted, in all its purity and power, to the generations to come.

We have not any fear of a departure from the truth of God, in our Connexion, while its polity is maintained inviolate. Our persuasion waxes stronger and stronger, that the preservation of the doctrines and discipline of the Body is inseparably connected. If our scriptural form of government were, by the abolition of the pastoral office, to be trampled down by the iron feet of a wild and heartless radicalism, Wesleyan theology would be seriously endangered. Its doctrines would soon be subjected to those liberal interpretations by which they would gradually undergo, what Dr. Chalmers would denominate, a reform backward. Hence, the almost deafening outcry which the self-styled reformers who have sprung up among us have raised against the measures that the Conference has been compelled to adopt, in order to secure "one faith" for the peace and prosperity of our Societies.

Nothing but an assurance of the truth of these sentiments, induced us to write an article on "The New Connexion and its Theology," which, some of our readers may remember, appeared in number 9 of the *Illuminator*. We there most frankly expressed our fears, lest the good old Methodist doctrines in the keeping of Mr. Kilham's adherents should degenerate, and so the fine gold become dim. Our remarks, it seems, have, as we anticipated, given great offence, and a person who calls himself "A Minister of the New Connexion," has undertaken to make a reply. We have read this defence with becoming attention, and it is with regret we are obliged to say, that our impression still remains—that the New Methodist Body has begun to depart, and is in the way for a much further deviation, from Wesleyan orthodoxy.

We asserted that many religious societies founded on their principles of ecclesiastical rule, have awfully apostatized from "the truth as it is in Jesus." As this painful fact is so strikingly evident in the present state of the old Presbyterian churches in this land, the writer who has replied to us, does not attempt to deny it. He does, however, labour to neutralize the force of the argument we had deduced from it, by putting us in remembrance, that a considerable number of Christian churches in this and other kingdoms, whose polity is fundamentally the same, are "sound in the faith." But this is not a demonstration that they can never fall into "damnable heresies." Are they not liable to the same temptations to apostacy as their predecessors? Does it not behove them to take the utmost heed, lest, while navigating the same sea of life, they also "make shipwreck of faith? Yes. The doctrinal deterioration of the old Presbyterian churches—the soul-destroying Socinianism in which they are engulfed—loudly and powerfully reiterate the inspired caution to the democratic and republican churches of Christendom—"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Our heart's desire and prayer to God is, that none of them may "fall after the same example of unbelief."

Many of these churches, conscious of their danger, have a "form of doctrine," clearly and strictly expressed, which their ministers are bound to believe and teach. In some of them where a liturgy is used in Divine worship, their Ministers are obliged to make a solemn repetition of it every Sabbath day; and in many of the others that dispense with forms of prayer, the Confession of Faith agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, is binding on the Preachers who occupy their pulpits. But these guards against the intrusion of strange doctrines, are not to be found in the New Connexion. They have no liturgy in their congregations; neither have they any doctrinal standard to be compared to the Westminster Confession of Faith. It is true, the Body

has a creed in what we may term its book of discipline. Yet it is one that is exceedingly loose and general in its construction; so that Preachers of *very different sentiments* may affirm their belief in its doctrines. If our former article be consulted, proofs of our position will be found. We may give, as one instance, the manner in which it speaks of the testimony that true Christians possess of their adoption into the family of God. It merely cites a text of scripture, "he that believeth hath the witness in himself." On this point, the Minister of the New Connexion who has censured us, asserts—"we have thus employed the words of the New Testament as the most unexceptionable that could be adopted." This proposition is so manifestly at variance with truth, that its writer must have been either in haste or in *warmth*, when he committed it to paper. We suspect the latter to have been the case, as he declares, that, because we have said that certain doctrines in the New Connexion creed are dangerously liberal in their construction, we are chargeable with "*audacity*." This Minister must know that if we were called upon to support the Methodist doctrine, that the Spirit of God directly witnesses to believers the fact of their sonship, we should go to Paul's epistles, and not to the passage which is put into their form of doctrine. Many Preachers who reject this Wesleyan doctrine as unscriptural, wild, visionary, fanatical, and mischievous, nevertheless proclaim from their pulpits—"he that believeth hath the witness in himself." And is a doctrine which is so stated, that preachers of the most opposite sentiments can declare their belief in it, expressed in "words the most unexceptionable that could be adopted." O! but, says this writer, we are "censuring the language of Divine inspiration." We deny the charge. We censure the compilers of the creed for not having given the *sense* of scripture—which all creeds are bound to do—on a very important doctrine of Methodism. We also censure them for having employed a text which does *not* prove the Divine and immediate evidence which believers enjoy, that they are the children of God.

We informed our readers that we found subjoined to the New Connexion creed, the following sentence:—"For the illustration of these doctrines we refer to the first four volumes of Mr. Wesley's Sermons, and to his Notes on the New Testament."* "It might," says our reposer, "be supposed, that this reference to Mr. Wesley's works would have satisfied every one, however precise and fastidious; but it does not satisfy *Epsilon*; he is determined to pass the sentence of condemnation." Is this true? Is *Epsilon* the only person it fails to satisfy, merely from a determination to condemn? Surely this writer forgot that the *New Methodist Magazine*, for 1828, is not satisfied with this reference. It is said, on page 280—"Our Preachers are virtually required to illustrate the doctrines we believe and teach, by Mr. Wesley's Sermons and his Notes on the New Testament. Now, I very much doubt whether every one of our Preachers has these works in his possession; and as we make a kind of secondary appeal to them as the standard of our religious belief, there is, at least, the appearance of *inconsistency*, in not requiring that all circuit Preachers should possess them." Nor was this the opinion of its respectable writer only: the editor and committee, associated with him in the management of the *Magazine*, concurred in it; for they published it, without note or comment, for the instruction of the Connexion. In such a state of things, there is not merely the "appearance," but the *reality* of inconsistency; and we shall repeat our former statement, that this reference to the standard writings of Wesleyan orthodoxy is *unauthoritative*: no rule exists binding the Preachers to read them, and requiring them to declare that they cordially believe every part of the creed as it is therein illustrated. This singular fact, the Minister of the New Connexion does not even attempt to deny. But how does he notice it? In the most *gentlemanly* manner, by informing us of our qualifications to "make an excellent Pope, to fill up the pontifical chair most admirably," &c. Such a display of ill-nature in a Christian Preacher is to be pitied; but we can excuse it, on account of the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed. He found himself between the horns of a dilemma, and it was, of course, no pleasant thing to be gored. Our declaration was either to be denied or justified: truth forced him on a course of justification on the ground which is most popular with heretics, in every age—"that submission is due to the scriptures alone." One of his observations is so deeply interesting, that we are greatly obliged to him for publishing it. It reads as follows:—"Should any attempt be made to enact a law bind-

* We have more than once had occasion to refer to the "Private Minutes" of the Conference of the Kilhamite Connexion. We again turn to this document, now lying before us; and, in corroboration of the assertion of our excellent correspondent, we extract the following:—

"27. That the word 'Wesleyan' be immediately expunged from all our documents, and that we resume our original title of Methodists of the New Connexion.

"28. That the title-page of the *Magazine* be continued as it is this year; afterwards, that the word 'Wesleyan' be omitted, as well as in our other documents."—*Private Minutes of the Conference held at Hanley, 1823*

ing the New Connexion Ministers to what is stated above, and requiring from them what this writer specifies, I feel confident that such an attempt would be promptly, unanimously, and successfully resisted by the Preachers." Hear this remarkable announcement, ye Wesleyan Methodists! The New Connexion has a most imperfect summary of doctrines, which, it declares, are illustrated in Mr. Wesley's Sermons, and Notes on the New Testament; yet, if any attempt were made to enact a law that the Preachers in that Body, should read, believe, and teach such an explanation of their creed, they would all unite to resist it! This writer says, that he and the rest of his brethren in the ministry would successfully oppose it. In this prediction, however, he lost sight of his beloved system of church government. If the Preachers resisted such a measure in the Conference, could they crush it in the *Quarterly Meetings* of the circuits? If these determined to enact the law in question, the Conference *durst not* refuse to register it on the Minutes. The Conference of 1834, for instance, agreed, that candidates for the ministerial office shall have some preparatory instruction; but the Quarterly Meetings said, *they shall not*; and so the Conference of 1835 bowed to their masters, and inserted it on their Minutes that the matter should be given up! So much for the *authority* of Conference, and the *balance of power* between the Preachers and the people. Though this New Connexion Minister has overlooked the fact, that he and his brethren in office are under lay dominion, in his calculation of their effectual resistance to any rule which would cause the reference of their doctrinal propositions to Mr. Wesley's works for explanation, to be more than simply a *nominal* and *taking* affair; yet his statement is entitled to deep attention, as it shows the *disposition* of these Preachers not to be bound to instruct their congregations in pure Methodist divinity.

Our conviction of the existence of such a state of mind is strengthened by the charge which this writer prefers against Wesleyan Ministers of having "a devoted attachment to unscriptural tests, and an infuriated zeal for non-essentials." What are "non-essentials?" We presume, this writer's views are so liberal, that the term includes whatsoever principles are not of a fundamental kind. With Preachers of this class, the existence of the triune God—the fall of man—the atonement of Christ—justification by faith—sanctification by the Holy Ghost—and the certainty of a future state, are the leading doctrines of Christianity. We admit the fact; but are there not other revealed truths, connected with them, necessary to be received and professed? Undoubtedly there are; and we believe they are contained in that gospel which the venerable Wesleys preached so energetically and usefully, through the length and breadth of the land. When Mr. Wesley died, it became the solemn duty of the Conference to preserve, with all diligence and fidelity, those doctrines which he, under God, had committed to their trust. This obligation the Conference has so nobly discharged that, after the lapse of nearly a century, since they were first declared by their founder and his coadjutors, Methodist Ministers now preach the very same doctrines. Numerous and powerful have been the efforts to corrupt several of our doctrines, but they were seasonably checked, and completely subdued. And how were these victories of truth achieved? By "unscriptural tests, and infuriated zeal for non-essentials?" No.—It was by the application of tests furnished by the word of God, and by a godly zeal to maintain every doctrine essential to preserve Methodism *as it was*. Yes;—it was thus that errors respecting the Sonship of Christ—the foreknowledge of God—the origin of faith—the witness of the Spirit—the necessity and extent of Christian holiness—and the eternity of future punishment, all deemed by certain liberals and reformers in the Methodist world to be "non-essentials," were prevented from spreading and multiplying in the Connexion.

This best kind of praise will never belong to the New Connexion. If the Independency which pervades the system will allow the Body to hold together for a century, it is not possible to foretell what un-Methodistical tenets will be taught in it. We cannot believe its ministry will be Wesleyan; for though the Connexion has not existed forty years, it has already departed from the unity of the Methodist faith. This fact has been demonstrated by some of the late acts of the late Conference. It is seen in the ministerial admission of Mr. Forsyth into the Connexion as a Preacher, who is to be considered as having travelled *twelve years* in its service. Why this triumphant exception?—He had rent 800 members from the Old Connexion; and—to borrow a phrase from "a Minister of the New Connexion"—"the oligarchy, and the slaves of the oligarchy," thought he deserved an ample recompense. It is true that he was expelled the Wesleyan Body. And for what cause?—He would both believe and *preach* doctrines opposed to Methodism. Some have said, that this is incorrect. Our advice to such persons is, see if you can reconcile Mr. Forsyth's views of the Sonship of Christ with Mr. Wesley's Notes on the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The task is impossible to be performed.

The same difference of doctrines between both Connexions, is also to be witnessed

in the reception of Mr. Jones as a travelling Preacher, by the New Methodist Conference. He has been a believer in *God's ignorance* of all future events in which the human will is concerned; and he can give "most liberal interpretations" of man's fall and the Saviour's atonement. His resignation of office was published in the *Advocate* and *Lantern*. And why did he resign?—*He feared expulsion*. Several grave charges were preferred against him, for which he was to have been tried by his District Committee; but he happily saved them the trouble, by withdrawing from the Connexion. He was accused of holding sentiments which tend to Socinianism. His "new light," as it was designated in the south of England, has already conducted some of its admirers into this destructive heresy. Ah, yes! Men who were once holy and happy in our religious community, have, through the erroneous notions which they derived from this gentleman's writings and ministrations, most seriously wandered from the essentials of Christianity; for they have erected a Socinian chapel in which to "deny the Lord that bought them." Nevertheless Mr. Jones can assent and consent to the creed of the New Connexion, especially as he is not by any law *obligated* to give it a Methodistical illustration; but to handle it on the broad principle which he well knows how to appreciate, that "submission is due to the Scriptures alone."

As Messrs. Forsyth and Jones have been welcomed into the New community, it is highly probable, if not certain, that more ministers from our Body would be gladly received. Nor would it be very particular about their theological sentiments. They might maintain that justifying faith is not the gift of God—the Spirit's witness to the adoption of Christians is only in the way of argumentation—entire sanctification is not attainable in this life—accepted believers cannot finally fall from the favour of God—the torments of Hell are not strictly speaking endless; and yet, when expelled by the Conference for these un-Wesleyan doctrines, obtain access to the ministry of the New Connexion. If "a minister" of that body should send forth a rejoinder to this article—an event which we fear not—and deny this declaration, we beg leave to assure him, that its "oligarchy and the slaves of the oligarchy" have proved, by their late Confidential proceedings, that a difference of sentiment on "non-essentials," is a matter of no moment with them. Moreover, he will permit us to ask him—are not the above doctrines, though decidedly at variance with Mr. Wesley's writings, "*non-essentials*?" Cannot Ministers who believe and teach them find their way to heaven? Such is the character of his liberality that he will, we doubt not, utter a reply in their favour. What then could hinder their entrance into the New Connexion? Wherein do these "non-essentials" differ from those of Messrs. Forsyth and Jones? Were such heterodox Preachers to be rejected by the New Methodist Conference, it would be chargeable with gross inconsistency, and an "infuriated zeal for non-essentials."

We would close this article by most respectfully inviting the attention of the more sober and candid part of the New Connexion to its subject. With some of these we have had free and friendly conversation; they have told us that they deplore the errors which are springing up in the body, and they detest the proselyting spirit of its aristocracy; which they apprehend will, some time or other, do immense mischief to the Connexion. Such views and feelings have our sympathy, and we wish they may extensively prevail.

EPSILON.

THE MAGIC LANTERN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

SIR—We have had discourses on more insignificant things than *lanterns* presented to us, and why should not we have one concerning them also, seeing they are somewhat ancient and classic things; at least as old as Diogenes, of cynical and tub-tabernacled notoriety. Simple things they were at first, and for the most part simple they remain; and some learned authors hold, that in proportion as they lose their primitive simplicity, they lose their identity and value as lanterns; which—as they were originally intended to hold a light, and to allow its rays to escape, to the dissipation of surrounding darkness—are bound by propriety, and by the relation and fitness of things, to do so in a perfectly unsophisticated manner, as the first lanterns of famous memory had laudably done, and as their history attests. Refraction, or any other optical delusion, they were forbidden, by the common and statute law affecting lanterns, to practice, on pain of being laid on the shelf as useless—broken in pieces, as dangerous—or in some other way degraded from their honourable illuminating occupation. Now, the schoolmen hold, as the result of "profound investigation and deep and mature thought," that a lantern made by mischievous urchins mal-appropriating a turnip by scooping out and throwing away so much of its substance as shall leave little more than the rind remaining, and allowing the light which they place in it to stream forth through certain apertures, analogous

to those in the human skull, is no true lantern, as it cannot answer any valuable, scientific, or useful purpose, and may probably affright some weak-minded person; a decision to which no man whose head is not of the turnip kind can, philosophically, object. When I first heard of the *Lantern* which had been manufactured at Liverpool, I thought it was one of this class. There were, I found on inspection, many turnipish attributes belonging to it; and its raw head and bloody-bones' properties were, as phrenologists say, "largely developed." Its inscription, however, declared it to be a "*Watchman's Lantern*," intended, not for one of the "ancient and quiet watchmen" of the olden time; but, very foolishly, for one of the new order, who do not use—because they do not require—the companionship of a lantern. And, indeed, the "*Watchman*" referred to, and for whose use this *Lantern* was ostensibly made, being well acquainted with the merits and demerits of lanterns generally, and with the demerits of *this one in particular*, has not, specially, noticed it; and would, ere this, have probably kicked it to shivers, but that he did not think it worth while to disturb the hosts of cross and puling children, who, in the intervals of their squalling, were amused with it; and especially, as at the first glance it appeared no true "*Watchman's Lantern*," but a spurious and worthless article. With the idea of a Jack o' Lantern there is something rather sublime connected, at least, too sublime for this Liverpool production. In many respects it is identified as belonging to the dark lantern tribe. Now, a dark lantern is defined by learned writers to be—"a rascally contrivance, used, at least from the days of Guy Fawkes, by his humble imitators in the art of mischief, to enable them to pursue their avocations whilst they remain undiscovered." But whilst *this* lantern is capable of being thus used—and is sometimes, nay, very frequently, so employed—it is, doubtless, to be considered in strict accordance with the established principles of lantern-science, as belonging to the class yclept magic lanterns; and has therefore no claims either to antiquity or classic distinction. As a magic lantern—which belongs not to the simple, but to the sophisticated and delusive, and therefore to the lowest grade of lanterns—it answers tolerably well. I have witnessed its performances in the hands of Rowland, Gordon, Farrer, Warren, and Co. and recollect the following:

It represented a person concentrating in himself a most extraordinary degree of piety—the most profound and admirable wisdom—the most consummate learning, courtesy, integrity, independence, and purity—incomparable eloquence and gigantic energy: so much so, that if the representation had been intended for St. Paul or Martin Luther, the Apostle and the reformer would have declared the magnifying power too great. I did not—(how should I?)—recognize the individual intended, but was told it was Samuel Warren, LL.D. Now, knowing that personage, I could not conceive how such a portraiture could have got into *men's* heads; when I recollected it *had not got there*, but into a magic lantern. This, of course, solved the difficulty, and I prepared for scene the second.

This was a group representing Fame crowning John Stephens with bays, as the first newspaper editor in the world, and proclaiming the *Christian Advocate* as the first journal of the day. All this very bright in its colouring, whilst the *Times*, *Herald*, and *Chronicle*, &c., appear in the shade. Now, having read in this celebrated journal a request, that a subscription should be made for the editor, and a declaration, that as Morison's pills could no longer preserve its vitality, nothing less than one thousand pounds could keep it alive for twelve mouths longer; I thought—why Fame, at no time over sober, is gone quite mad; but it occurred—it is not Fame in her temple, but inclosed in a lantern, and evidently intoxicated with the fume of the lamp, which is not an oil but a *gin* one.

Then came a series of propositions and syllogisms, viz.: assertion is proof—suspicion is demonstration—discipline is tyranny—the people are omnipotent—impudence is virtue—and the Preachers ought to be puppets; our approval is the rule of right; we approve of Dr. Warren's rebellion—of stopping the supplies—of disturbing congregations—of agitating the Connexion—and of vilifying the Preachers. Therefore, these things are right. Whatever *we* frown on must be ruined. But *we* frown on the Conference. Therefore, the Conference must be ruined. Aye, said I, this is "logic in a lantern" with a vengeance, and not that taught in the schools.

The next was an exhibition of "men singularly fitted for great actions," most hugely magnified. Had Don Quixote seen them the whole machine would have gone to rack. Some of the *singularly great*, thus represented, did not *know themselves*, (but this is no new thing in their case), and it was impossible for their most intimate acquaintance to recognize them. It was remarked that the glass slide on which these worthies were drawn, was *cracked* throughout, just where their *heads* were painted, which untoward accident rendered the portraiture so far a *faithful one*. There was some confusion among the exhibitors when this circumstance was discovered, and not a little amusement among the audience.

Then came pictures of Manchester and Liverpool. The Methodist chapels in both places were represented as nearly empty; the Societies scattered; and the Preachers and Trustees at their wits' end. Tabernacles more numerous than Peter even thought of appeared on every side, crowded with pious, intelligent, and orderly people; and the affairs of the Grand Central were painted in blooming prosperity. How is this? said I, aloud—I have seen the congregations in both towns lately, and this description is utterly false. As false as the preceding, said my neighbour; and added—It is Methodist statistics in a *Lantern*.

Indeed, in the whole exhibition the delusive powers of the *Lantern* were displayed. Some things were minified, some magnified—others distorted—and again, others inverted. *True* delineation was out of the question, as it was out of the *intention* of the makers of this lantern. Simon Magus knew not, magician though he was, of such an instrument, or he would have been a much greater “one” than he was. But his successors live in happier days; and they hope to have better success than he had, though some authors doubt that. Lovers of truth are disgusted with the exhibition, which only pleases those who are in love with error, and disposed to “believe a lie.” Upon the whole, in conformity with the definition given by schoolmen of a lantern, it is evident that *this* is no *true* lantern; but as *sophisticated* and *false* a one as ever appeared since lanterns first became corrupt and depraved. For all useful purposes it is utterly useless, and would be mischievous, if its perversions and distortions were not so glaring. The charge for admission to the exhibition, which take place once a fortnight, is two-pence; but, we understand, for want of more of the patronage of “an enlightened and discerning public,” the proprietors have already “gained a considerable loss” by their speculations. I shall perhaps go to the exhibition again, and am—Yours, &c. OMEGA.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The *amiable* and *venerated* Dr. Warren has been illustrating at Warrington, a few days ago, how well he deserves these favourite epithets amongst his admirers, by calumniating, in the grossest manner, men who were fathers in Christ before he was born, and whose names will be had in the sweetest and most reverential remembrance, long after the amiable and *venerated* Doctor is dead and forgotten. Our trusty correspondent informs us, that he was holding forth, for nearly three hours, to a motley congregation of the very scum of the place, who applauded his speech to the echo, especially in his miserable and depraved attempts to be witty on the subject of the *fidelity* and *purity* of the Connexion; forgetting all the while that he was standing there himself as a signal and irrefragable proof of both the one and the other. To the credit of Warrington, however, be it remarked, that scarcely any respectable person, and not a dozen Wesleyans were present at this disgraceful business.

Our correspondent from Northwich has our thanks. He has exposed the wicked but foolish attempts of the Grand Central agitators to ruin the missionary meetings, held at that place and Middlewich, on Monday and Tuesday, the 2nd and 3rd instant. When will these deluded men see that their attempts to stop the supplies only end in their own discomfiture and disgrace? That they only elicit the laugh of the infidel and the pity of the wise and the good? What did it avail for them to abuse the body of Wesleyan Ministers in general, and their own preachers in particular, calling the former a band of hypocrites, and the latter (Messrs. Dixon and Hague) a couple of liars? What good did it do their unholy cause to vituperate the Rev. George Marsden, who was welcomed by the Societies as a *venerated* and esteemed visitor, on the occasion, to advocate a cause dear to God and to all good men? True it is, that all this scandalous blackguardism was hugely to the taste of their numerous and *enlightened* auditory, who expressed their approbation uproariously enough with clapping of hands, shouts of laughter and similar demonstrations of the high gratification which the speeches of Messrs. Wallace and Dignum afforded. No doubt they acted strictly on the advice which they received—namely, not to honour the pending missionary services with their presence, nor the treasury of God with their contributions.—But, alas for the cause of Grand Central Association agitation! the meetings of the friends of missions were numerous, respectable, and gratifying, and the collections, after all, an advance upon the amount of the preceding year!—As a specimen of the enlightened and *discerning* minds of the bulk of the attenders of anti-methodistical meetings, we quote the following from the *Watchman*:—“A respectable gentleman who attended one of these meetings, lately held at Mr. Alexander’s Chapel, in Finsbury-square (*kindly* lent for the occasion), in order to learn what were the grievances complained of, desired a person who stood by him not to prevent him from hearing by expressing so loudly his approbation of the speaker, when the person observed, in reply, that he was so interested in the subject that he could not repress his feelings. ‘I have been paying tithes,’ says he, ‘to those rascally church parsons for many years, and I am delighted to hear this Mr. Eckett blow up their whole concern.’”

Communications have been received from “Urbane,”—“Epsilon,”—“Omega,”—and “Observer.” Number 21 was in type when the valuable paper of our London correspondent arrived. We hope he will give some addition to his information by the time we go to press next.

The letter of “O. P. Q.” of Sheffield, arrived too late for insertion in our present Number. It shall appear in the next. We hope our valuable correspondent will kindly favour us with other contributions.—“Brother Joseph” did not arrive in time. It shall be attended to.

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THE ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION ;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES ; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY ; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY FORTNIGHT.

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THE LONDON AGITATORS:

THE facts connected with the adjourned meeting, for agitating Methodism, held in Finsbury chapel, Moorfields, on Wednesday November 4, are few, easily told, and indeed, are already before the public. Barford was in the chair; Eckett, of course, the chief speaker. Caveats were thrown in by a knot of youths, some of them sons of Preachers. At first they were ordered to be silent, afterwards called to reply to certain statements; and, eventually, one of them was given in charge to a police officer. The parties were heard before the Lord Mayor, on the following morning, who dismissed the case, saying, there was no cause whatever for Mr. Farrar's detention, and that he had his remedy if he chose to use it.

The matter, as a whole, is full of instruction. We all know that the agitators have long considered the Methodist Preachers as the worst chairmen in the world, and their mode of conducting our Leaders' and Quarterly meetings as bad beyond all further endurance. Mr. Barford has been set up as the model of a chairman; and here we have a specimen of what our meetings will be when Methodism is properly reformed. He came with a speech ready written for the occasion, which, however, he was not able to read without difficulty. The good man sat patiently, for three hours, to hear Eckett lecture on ecclesiastical history and church government. When disapprobation was expressed, he was nonplused at once; for he could control neither his friends nor his foes, and in the end, according to the police officer, the meeting became "a regular row." In his capacity of president, he has laid down a principle which will enable the Preachers to get rid of himself and his agitating friends, without contradiction. The *Advocate* says, "Mr. Eckett suggested that those who disliked the statements which were made *had better withdraw*." "Mr. John Farrar *continued to interrupt, notwithstanding the admonition* he had received." So he was expelled by force. Eckett and his friends have long been told they had *better withdraw*, but they "*continue to interrupt*" the peace of the Society, "*notwithstanding the admonition*" they have received; and, of course, they will not object to an application

of their own principle and practice to their own case. That Mr. Barford might end his official duties in a manner answerable to this beginning, he informed the Lord Mayor that the orators were hissed by their opponents, and applauded by their friends, and that it was "the acclamation in *reply to the hissing* which was the principal cause of the interruption." From all this we may infer, that when these men have reformed Methodism, and take it into their own hands, it will often need the aid of the police, and the interference of the civil magistrate.

The *Advocate* says there were 2000 persons assembled. A gentleman present thinks there might be about 800, of all sorts. Nobody supposes they were all Methodists, as the gentlemen who got up the meeting are known to have acquaintances who are not in Society. As Mr. Thurston is at once a prominent agitator, a Class-leader, and a noted manufacturer of billiard-tables, he must be connected both with saints and gamblers. The attendance of a few of the latter sort, therefore, is no improbability, as they would wish to oblige an old friend, and are always partial to a scramble, and therefore to a reform in Methodism.

The editors of the *Advocate* are wonderfully indignant at the fact of the agitators being contradicted by a band of youths, some of them the sons of Preachers. Such instances of filial affection must have seemed very strange in such a meeting as this. There is a newspaper, under the special management of two Preachers' sons, who have long laboured—and in their own opinion, with triumphant success—to prove that the Methodist Preachers are the most unprincipled knaves who have appeared in modern times; while every body knows that their own fathers were active, influential, and leading members of the brotherhood. The lads who bearded Goliath, in Finsbury chapel, seem to have had a better opinion of their fathers, and believing them to be men of untainted integrity, generously resolved that no agitator should publicly impeach their honour, without a public contradiction. Whatever these youths may be in other respects, they seem to be wise in their generation; and indeed they ought to be warned, by the new mode of begging a morsel of bread, paraded in the *Advocate*, from week to week. It is wise in them to honour and vindicate their fathers, and their fathers' friends, since, although by slandering them, in order to gratify a faction, a precarious subsistence may be obtained for a time, yet this, in fact, is the high road to beggary.

The meeting has produced a further developement of the "ineffable hypocrisy" which has characterized the Association from the beginning. To the early meetings, called by the agitators, in Liverpool and elsewhere, the Preachers were invited, for the purpose of discussing the points in dispute. Several Preachers also received letters of invitation to attend the Sheffield meeting, held in the Kilhamite chapel. On the present occasion, the Farrars were called upon, by name, to reply to certain statements which were made. The event proves that the meaning of all this apparent fair dealing was, that the Preachers, and their friends, might be led on to offer something in their own defence, and then be charged with a breach of the peace, and committed to the care of a constable. Hear the *Advocate*. "Mr. Cuthbertson said, 'Will you allow discussion?'" "Yes," says Eckett, "at any time, and any place you may appoint." The orator then went on to say, "We have given them a fair opportunity—we have openly challenged them. Will they accept the challenge?" Some persons, it seems, thought that *any time* and *any place* included the *present time* and the *present place*. According-

ly, "Mr. Luke Farrar expressed a wish to address the meeting, but the public voice was so decided against him that he was compelled to retire. Mr. John Farrar, who continued to interrupt, was at length removed by an officer, and conveyed to the Coleman-street watch-house." "Challenge" and "discussion" mean a police officer and a prison.

As the *Advocate* affects to speak of these young persons as children, so he proceeds to say something to them about bugbears, and hopes they will be frightened, and offend no more. To be sure, he intimates they have escaped this once; but then, the Mayor is going out of office, and the next may be of a different opinion. As if it were possible for *any* Lord Mayor to punish a young man for legally rebutting the slanders thrown on the character of his father. Oh, but he adds, this opposition work must be put down; otherwise, religious and philanthropic meetings may be interrupted in the same way. We advise them to make themselves easy. Agitators may begin their meetings with singing and prayer, proceed to say all manner of evil against the Conference, and then turn round and call this religion and philanthropy; but all the world knows very well it is neither the one nor the other.

Shakspeare thought that to steal a man's good name is a worse thing than to steal his purse. The express business of the agitators is to rob the Methodist Preachers of their good name, and if they will exercise their calling, they must take it with all its chances and perils, for robbers are unprotected by law, and whoever feels it in his heart to oppose them may do so with perfect impunity.

A MARVELLOUS THING!

OR, THE NEW CONNEXION AGAINST THE GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.

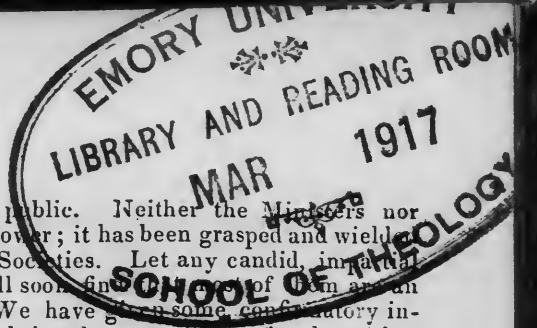
As it is necessary that persons who are piously disposed should be formed into societies so it is requisite to preserve these religious institutions from heresy, schism, and immorality, to the utmost extent, in order to secure their happiness and prosperity. We find this most important duty laid in the New Testament upon Christian ministers, and they are made responsible to the great Head of the church for its fulfilment.—Timothy was desired to "withdraw" himself from disorderly and discreditable professors; Titus was commanded to "reject a man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition;" and the angels of the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira are censured for allowing false, corrupt, and seducing teachers to remain in communion with the simple, holy followers of the Lamb. Not the least intimation is given, that in their administration of discipline to maintain purity of doctrine and practice in the church, they were to be "*officered*," by being under the absolute control of a few individuals, sustaining minor functions, among the laity. No; for had the power to expel unworthy members and erroneous teachers been placed in the hands of a secular order of office-bearers, the Holy Ghost ought to have charged *them*, and not Timothy and Titus, to exercise it; and the Son of God should have sharply rebuked these lay-officers, and not the angels, in the cases of Pergamos and Thyatira, for having neglected to use their authority.

These interesting truths were well known to the immortal Wesley; and when he was providentially led to form the "United Society" that bears his name, the power of expulsion, as well as of admission, came scripturally and naturally—for he declares it was *unsought* by him—into his possession. This prerogative to exclude obstinate offenders from Christian fellowship, for manifest violations of the general laws of holy Scripture, or of the particular rules of the Connexion, was retained and exercised by Mr. Wesley, and the assistants whom he chose to employ, to the end of his days; and the same authority, under certain guards and securities judged expedient to prevent its abuse, has been transmitted to the present generation of Methodist Preachers. These facts are most distinctly avowed in the Minutes of the late Conference; and the principle they contain is declared to be "essential to the scriptural duties and functions of the pastoral office."

It is admitted by the Association, that Mr. Wesley and the superintendents did, for many years, hold the power to eject lawless persons from Society; but they assert, that the Conference of 1797 surrendered it into the hands of Leaders' meetings. An attempt was first made to support this declaration by appealing to the rule in the class-books, which affirms, that "no Leader, or Society-Steward, shall be removed from his office, but in conjunction with the Leaders' meeting." This law, however, soon failed to answer the purpose for which it was adduced; and was, consequently, left for something of a more promising nature to be subsequently considered. This was a wise proceeding; for the interpretation given of the rule was so *forced* as to be flatly opposed to the intention of Conference in making it. This venerable Body of Ministers knew too well their duty to God and to the Connexion, than to invest Leaders with the two-fold office of judge and jury; and so give these local officers *all* the authority, and leave themselves *none*, in the exclusion of persons from Society. Had the Conference made such an enactment, they would have been seriously unfaithful to the trust reposed in them; and it would have presented a passing strange anomaly in the system of their pastoral superintendence. The true meaning of the law is, that there shall not be any clandestine expulsions; every accused officer, if he desire it, shall be tried by his peers; and, if guilty, be thus excluded office, by the superintendent, in conjunction with the Leaders' meeting; just as the chairman of a sessions transports a prisoner, or the judge at an assize dooms a criminal to be executed, in conjunction with a jury.

The next effort that was made to sustain the charge of usurpation against the Conference was by bringing forward an unauthorised paraphrase of our Society rules, published in the year 1800. When the Association met with this tract, they rejoiced "as one that findeth great spoil." In the first transports of their bliss, it was instantly and unanimously agreed to reprint and circulate it in all parts of Great Britain. We believe, Mr. Eckett, who is now agitating some of our Societies to draw away disciples after him, was so pleased when a copy was given him, that he said at the delegate meeting held in Manchester during April last, he was amply recompensed for his loss of time and money in coming from London to obtain so important a document. We have designated it an *unauthorised paraphrase* of some of our rules; and we speak, in this respect as well as in others, the words of truth and soberness. It is only a paraphrase, as a careful comparison of it with the laws of Methodism as contained in the Minutes of Conference, will abundantly testify: it is likewise unauthorised, for the Conference never sanctioned its publication. Still we would inquire, what it contains that so much delights the Association? It seems to be a solitary statement which has served as a text from which to "lecture"—that is, to scandalise and abuse the Conference—in scores of English towns and villages; and it reads as follows:—"No Leader or Steward can be put out of his place but by a majority of Leaders, or a Quarterly Meeting; neither can any Member of Society be excluded, but by a majority at a Leaders' meeting." As this sentence was not the original and genuine rule—a fact which the Minutes of Conference for 1797 fully establish—it must be interpreted by the law which was then enacted, and that requires the expulsion of officers and members to be in "conjunction with the Leaders' meeting." It asserts, no Methodist is to be "excluded but by a majority of Leaders;" and the sense to be consistent must be, that the decision of a majority of these officers, as to the guilt of an accused member, is essential to his legal excommunication. This is—and has been for nearly forty years—one of the laws of our Connexion.

We do not, however, expect, especially after reading the fierce remarks on this subject, published in the *Lantern*, that our interpretation of Methodistical law will be received by the Association as the right and true one. They have charged the Conference with "the eternal disgrace of altering the rule of 1800, by mercilessly wresting from the people one of their most essential and valuable privileges." This is a heavy accusation preferred against a large Body of Christian Ministers; but to this heavy accusation they unite to put forward the plea of *not guilty*. Though it has been industriously propagated from Dan to Beersheba, and many thousands of persons have received it as substantial, by "proofs strong as holy writ;"—yet they all attest it to be as false as it is degrading and injurious. To prove their innocence, we appeal not to Cæsar, for this is not necessary, but to the New Connexion; and, surely, such a tribunal will gain the approval of the Association. The New Methodists are their cordial friends, and our inveterate enemies. We can easily account for this state of the affections. They deeply sympathize with the Association in their strong hostility to the Wesleyan government, and they would exceedingly rejoice to see the old ship either revolutionized in her management, or blown up into a thousand fragments.—They profess, like the Associationists, a great desire to witness our Connexion based, on the principle of an equality of rights between the Preachers and the people; but, when they say their own community is founded on this axiom (if they do not deceive



themselves), they are guilty of deluding the public. Neither the Ministers nor the people in the New Connexion possess much power; it has been grasped and wielded principally by a secular class of officers in the Societies. Let any candid, impartial person read the Rules of this Body, and he will soon find evidence of an attempt at an outrage upon its radical doctrine of equality. We have given some condemnatory instances in former Numbers of the *Illuminator*, and they have not been refuted, neither will they be, for they are unanswerable.

Moreover, this Connexion have exhibited to the world at large their deeply rooted enmity to our religious communion. By publishing scurrilous letters—making inflammatory speeches—subscribing money to remove the “mill stone” from the neck of Dr. Warren—giving up their Theological Institution to please him—supporting the *Advocate* and the *Lantern*, and lending their chapels and schools in Bury, Nottingham, Stockport, Hanley, Halifax, London, and Sheffield, to the notorious revilers of Methodist Preachers; they have done their utmost to inflict injury on our Connexion, and have bidden the Association “God speed.”

Nevertheless, as Christians when they have been accused of forging any part of the Old Testament have appealed to the infidel Jews for their triumphant vindication; so the Wesleyan Preachers who are charged by the Association with changing the construction of a certain law, that they might usurp the rights of the people, can refer their case to the New Connexion—their bitter, diligent, persevering adversaries—in full confidence that, by their decision, they shall stand honourably acquitted. This Connexion is well able to judge on the point at issue between us and the Grand Central Body. Its founders had an entire acquaintance with all the particulars for which they petitioned, and also with those which the Conference granted in 1797.—The *New Methodist Magazine* for 1826, contains a history of that community; and one part of it, commencing at page 368, is exceedingly important. It gives an *exact* copy of the Rules of Pacification as they were sent by the Conference then sitting in Leeds to the delegates who, in the same town and at the same time, were assembled in Ebenezer chapel; where, after duly considering them and not being satisfied, they “unanimously resolved to separate, and form a New Itinerancy.” And is their statement of the celebrated Rules of Pacification precisely similar to that which the Conference declares to be the genuine one? It is. The paraphrase of 1800, which speaks of officers and members being expelled by “a majority of the Leaders’ meeting,” is in no part of the document. Neither is the right, or power asserted to be conveyed by such an expression, or by any other, to be found in their account of the new regulations of 1797, but just the reverse, for they declare that it was never communicated by the Conference to Leaders’ meetings. The historian when noticing that part of the rules of Pacification which refers to expulsion from Society, writes as follows:—

“It is stated that no Member of Society should be expelled for immorality, unless the charge was first proved at a Leaders’ meeting. So far it was satisfactory; but there were two other points relating to Membership of far greater importance; namely, their continuing such in Society as were immoral and the exclusion of others against whom no immorality could be brought. That some immoral characters have been kept in Society, is, perhaps, what no person will deny; and in one instance, to mention no more, about thirty Leaders and Local Preachers were expelled at one time, when they were allowed to be sound in the faith, and pure in their morals; AND THIS POWER THE PREACHERS STILL RETAINED.”

We have transcribed this paragraph out of the New Connexion history, highly censurable as some part of it undoubtedly is, for the sake of the great principle and momentous fact with which it concludes. It is of such importance as to roll away a mountain of slander which the *Advocate*, the *Lantern*, and a host of speech-making “Grandees” have heaped on the Wesleyan Conference. By these agents of agitation it has been trumpeted through the land, that the Methodist Ministers have broken faith with their people, violated the Rules of Pacification made in 1797, and most unmercifully wrested from the Societies one of their greatest rights and privileges; but what say their dear friends and supporters—the New Connexion? They declare the charge is *untrue*, and the Associationists are *false* witnesses; for “the power to expel Members the Preachers still retained.”* Indeed, this is one of their principal reasons as given in the passage we have quoted, for their separation from the Wesleyan com-

* The New Connexion, after labouring in the metropolis since the year 1800, have at length obtained one chapel to call their own. It has been opened very lately for divine worship and public scandal. The London Association occupied it on Wednesday the 23d November, to revile and degrade the Wesleyan Conference. Mr. Eckett appears to have been the chief speaker on the occasion, and the principal part of his speech was, accusing the Conference of having robbed the official meetings of the power of expelling members which it had conceded to them in 1797. He declared, “it was only at the last Conference that the alteration was made in the Minutes of the Conference, giving them that power.” Yet the history of the religious body in whose chapel he made his charges, most triumphantly refutes them, and clearly convicts Mr. Eckett of the sin of having borne false witness against his neighbour. Surely, words will never cease!

munity. They advance two objections against the authority to exclude persons from religious communion being retained by the Preachers. One of them is, that the Methodist Ministers refuse to exercise this prerogative in some instances which demand it, by continuing immoral Members in Society. We must deny the truth of this allegation. Let criminal characters be charged and convicted before the proper tribunal (for without such a procedure they cannot be lawfully excommunicated), and, we believe, the Superintendents will faithfully perform their official duty. We beg leave to tell the New Connexion, that immoral individuals are more likely to be kept in Society with them than with us. Their system makes certain wealthy manufacturers as much the lords over some Societies, as they are over their secular establishments. Suppose that these distinguished Members are chargeable with neglecting the means of grace—drinking to excess, or grossly oppressing the hireling in his wages—how are they to be cut off from church fellowship? By the Preachers? No; for these know that, in the balancing of power, they have been treated most unjustly; the balancers, as was very natural, took care to have Benjamin's mess. The expulsion must be by a majority of Leaders, who, in the case under consideration, will be powerfully tempted to neglect their duty. And why? *The subsistence both of them and their families is at stake.* If these officers turn them out of the Society, they will have cause to fear these expelled masters will turn them out of their employ! How perilous is such a situation to the enforcement of the New Testament law of purity in a Christian church!

A second objection made by the New Connexion to the Preachers retaining, in 1797, the authority to expel from Society is, that upon officers who are sound in faith and pure in morals, it is sometimes exercised. We are willing to admit that Leaders and Local Preachers who believe Methodist doctrines and live free from scandalous criminality, are occasionally visited with expulsion. What then? Is it tyrannical and unscriptural? We deny the truth of such an accusation. Such individuals were proved to be guilty of habitual railing—sowing discord—promoting division—and preventing the prosperity of the work of God. And what saith the Scriptures? We are to “mark” and “avoid” these trampers upon the peace and unity of the Lord's people; and this inspired rule can be kept only in one way—by trying them for their offences, and excluding them from the society of those that wish to live in godly quietness.

The testimony of the New Connexion, that the Preachers in 1797, still retained their power to expel from Society, and the reasons which they have assigned why they dissented from it, most clearly demonstrate the Association to be guilty of libelling the Conference; and we seriously call upon these slanderers to “bring forth fruits worthy of repentance.”*

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

One of my first objects on my arrival in this circuit, was to make myself fully acquainted with the extent of the disaffection toward the Conference and toward Methodism, and with the character and purposes of those persons who made themselves the most active and zealous in the work of opposition to that cause which had once done them good, and who might appear, from their place in the Society, from their character and station in life, as well as from any other circumstance with which they might be connected, to be the head and soul of the opposition we had to grapple with in this place. I had soon an opportunity to do this; partly at some of their meetings, at which as they held them in our chapel, I thought it right to attend, and to oppose them as far as I could; and partly from private interviews, by calling upon them at their houses, in order to converse with them freely and fully on the subjects of their fancied complaints, or as I might happen to meet with them in any other way. In this intercourse with the persons in question I made it a point of duty, as often as I could, to have some one with me, as a witness to what might be said; and, for the most part, my colleague, Mr. Hobill, was the person who occupied this place. In this way, I

* We happened to meet the other day with the November number of the *New Connexion Magazine*. It reports progress in their wonted *creditable* style, and shows that, like eagles, they pounce upon more than one kind of prey. We have extracted from its pages the subjoined “choice bit” of intelligence:—

“AN OPENING AT BELPER.

“On Sunday, September 20th, 1835, a Society of *seventy* members in Belper, *formerly connected with the Primitive Methodists*, were taken into church-fellowship, as a part of the Nottingham circuit!! They have 112 scholars in a Sabbath school, two or three places to preach in, and four Local Preachers.”

When a New Connexion Minister again asserts in the *Lantern* how many per cent. the Body has increased, he will, of course, keep facts like the above on the back ground.

obtained evidence, from the lips of the persons themselves, not only that they had been, but that they still were members of the Association; and that they were aiders and abettors of the objects of that conspiracy against Methodism and truth; and, from principle, opposed to the discipline of that branch of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ to which they professed to belong. With some of these infatuated men, I had several interviews in this way; and I talked and reasoned with them, as far and as long as I could, till, in one or two of the cases (Daniel Douglas was one, and Joseph Sherwen was another), it was intimated that these visits from me were no longer desired. My colleague, Mr. Hobill, was with me on both these occasions. In all my interviews with these persons, I endeavoured to be as calm as I could, and even mild also, when I found a disposition to sobriety on the part of the persons in question, which, at times, with some of the individuals, might chance to be the case. But when I found them asserting—strongly and vehemently asserting—things which I knew to be false, I did not hesitate in the least flatly to contradict them to their face, and to challenge them to prove their assertions in any way they could; and I thought it right to do this, both in public and in private.

During the course of these my interviews with them, it was not difficult to discover, that, if they persisted in the course they were openly pursuing, they could not possibly be retained within the bosom of our Society. They openly, and in the most violent terms, before our people, calumniated the whole Body of our Preachers as tyrants, and the system of Methodism itself as tyranny, popery, and every thing else that was abominable and not fit to be endured: while they, on their part, were represented, each man by his brother, as all that was perfect and excellent, and as men who were shamefully deprived of their rights by their Preachers, in the most cruel and arbitrary way; so that they had been literally compelled, by their sufferings, and sorrows, and wrongs, to unite in defence of their rights, and to determine, by bold but necessary undertakings, to bring their tyrannical Preachers down to their own place. Of such like materials as these, I met with a pretty fair sample the first day I came into this town, in one of their public meetings, held in the chapel in the evening, when the prayer-meeting was over; in which one of the Sheffield heroes, in July and August last, stood up, and falsely charged the "tyrannical Conference" with having treated "respectable bodies of Trustees," and "the Rochdale delegates, who were not connected with the Association, just as they had treated the delegates of the Association." So that it was not the Association alone, but all and every other person of their own Societies, that the Conference and Methodist Preachers insulted and wronged. These false statements, made in the most bitter and virulent manner, before a great number of people in our chapel, were, of course, met; and the speaker was told to his face, either that he was ignorant of the things he pretended to know, or else he was deliberately lying to the people; and that, in either case, he was deceiving the people with falsehood, and leading them astray. It was not without much clamour and opposition that these statements were made; and they had to force and cut their way through plentiful emissions of such sounds as venomous reptiles, when furious, are well known to make. And as this bitterness of spirit was evidently rooted and fixed in the heads and leaders of the faction banded to oppose us, and as they clamoured for things which my judgment told me were unscriptural; and never were, nor ought to be, any part of Methodism, and could only tend to upturn our whole system by the roots, it was impossible I could entertain a doubt as to what line of conduct I must pursue, with regard to these men. I, therefore, gave them to understand, that if they persisted in their hostility to our system, it would be my painful duty to bring them to answer for their conduct before a Leaders' meeting.

In the meanwhile I found that the rules of the Association had been read and expounded in the classes, and that Methodism, as connected with the Conference, was regularly denounced before the members in the classes; and, moreover, that they were, at the same time, dissuaded from contributing to our cause as usual, and directed to give their monies for the use of the Association. Such was their infatuation, or loss of all principles of honesty, that they could not, or would not, perceive the wrong there was in this. They could not, or would not, perceive, that having been entrusted with classes belonging to the Wesleyan Conference, on the known understanding and condition that they were faithfully to help the Preachers to build them up in piety, and in love and attachment to all our rules and discipline, it was a breach of faith in them, a flagrant violation of a trust and of their own voluntary engagement, to alienate the minds of their classes either from the Conference, or from those laws and rules of discipline which they had engaged to observe. Yet, so far had they gone on in their classes, that some of the Leaders had actually refused to take money for the support of our cause, when one of his members offered it; and some other members had left off meeting in class, because of the perpetual importunity to which their Leader had sub-

jected them, in order to shake their attachment to Methodism, and to induce them to enrol their names as members of the Association. So that, by these treacherous arts and devices, almost the whole Society at Whitehaven had been allured from true Methodism and attachment to their Preachers, and even filled with bitterness against them both; and these things were becoming worse every day.

On examination I found I had twelve persons in the whole which it would be my duty to impeach—a most formidable task this in a circuit; but I saw no way to escape it, consistent with the duty which I owed to Methodism, and to the sound part of our Society in this town, and to those very persons themselves, and also to God.

I now drew up the following indictment, and gave or sent a copy of it to each of them:—"Sir—You are hereby requested to attend at a Leaders' meeting on Monday evening next, September 14, at eight o'clock, in the vestry, to answer to the following charges which will be preferred against you, namely: first, your having been connected with an association called 'The Grand Central Association.' Secondly, your aiding and abetting the said Association. Thirdly, your opposing the discipline of the Society of which you are a member." And as I knew some of these individuals were Trustees, I published, distinctly, from the pulpit, on the Sunday before the trial took place, when I was announcing the Leaders' meeting, that, the Trustees were at liberty to attend, and take part in such branches of the business which would be brought before the meeting, as properly, according to our rules, belonged to them.

On the Monday evening, after preaching, they all obeyed the summons except one, who had that morning set out on a journey. There was mob of all sorts of people attending them into the chapel, crowding up even to the vestry door, and anxiously awaiting the event. I had arranged for my colleagues to be with me, as well as the three or four Leaders whom I knew to be faithful; and I believe all those Leaders were present whom I had not thought fit to impeach; brought, as I have good reason to believe, by the opposite party in the full and confident expectation that they should ride through the business of the meeting on a high tide of votes. But no Trustee came to the meeting simply in the capacity of Trustee. All the Trustees in the town were among the Leaders, or else among the accused, except one, who, although he knew of the business, and of his privilege to be present, did not think proper to attend. On calling over the names of the Leaders, and looking round, there was one man present among the Leaders who was not on the list. I requested to know if he came there as a Trustee. But finding he was not come as a Trustee, but was a Leader from the country, I requested him to retire from the meeting, as not having a right there. But the opposite party strongly opposed this. He was a man of their party; and they requested him not to obey my order. "He had," they said, "as much right to be there as either of my colleagues." And they were for "*taking the sense of the meeting*," whether my colleagues had any right to attend a Leaders' meeting, except as my substitute only, when I happened not to be there. I found it was of no use to contend concerning the presence of this person, and having distinctly protested against it, as a violation of our rules and discipline, I proceeded to the business of the evening for which we were met.

Having called over the names of the accused, I next addressed a few words to the rest of the Leaders, separate and apart from them; the purport of which was to acquaint them, "that it would be their solemn duty in this case, as in the presence of God, and as those who must give an account, to judge of, and express their opinion, as to whether the brethren before them, whose names I had read, were guilty or not of the charges which would be preferred against them; confining themselves solely and exclusively, in this stage of the business, to the facts of the case." And here I may just remark, that I was frequently and much interrupted while I was stating these things to the meeting, by various questions and remarks irrelevant to the point then before us, but to which I paid as little attention as I possibly could, that I might preserve the more order and decorum in what I had to do.

I called the name of William Baisbrown, and requested to know from himself whether he was guilty of any one of the three charges mentioned in his indictment, which charges I then distinctly read. He pleaded guilty to the two first; but would not say any thing concerning the last, till certain questions had been discussed by that meeting, the purport of which was, namely—"to take the sense of the meeting as to whether, being a member of the Association, and aiding and abetting its objects and design, was a violation of our rules." He demanded to know whether I would put such a question to the meeting. I told him I could not submit any such question to the meeting; that if he or any other person wished to say any thing on that, or any other subject, they should say as much as they pleased after we had gone through the facts of the case; and I begged that I might not be interrupted; and then, as Mr. Baisbrown had pleaded guilty to two of the charges, I deemed it unne-

cessary to trouble him concerning the third, and so proceeded to the next name I had on my list. But the moment I attempted to do this, I was clamourously interrupted, and told that "Mr. Baisbrown's case was not decided," &c. Here, again, discussion was demanded, and I was requested to show what law Mr. Baisbrown had broken, by aiding, or abetting, or by being a member of the Central Association, and the like. I told them he had acknowledged himself a member of the Association, which was sufficient for my purpose, as it implied opposition to Methodism, and to Methodist rules and discipline; and then I proceeded again, amidst much clamour and noise, to the next person on my list, and requested him to plead to his charge. But he was ordered by Mr. Baisbrown and others not to answer me a word; and he obeyed their mandate, I then told them, that if they did not choose to plead, their silence would be taken as an acknowledgement of their guilt, which they received with expressions of scorn and contempt; and again charged the "brother" not to speak. I then passed on to the next name; and he also, in like manner, was charged not to speak. And so I proceeded to the next; and all being charged in succession not to speak, I received an answer from *none*. And having, in this way, gone to the bottom of my list, I concluded the meeting, and came away, as did also my colleagues, and the three or four Leaders of classes who were faithful to our cause. It was a night much to be remembered by us all. Never did infatuated men more completely defeat their own purposes, or more effectually cut the throats of their own schemes, than these heroes of reform, on that memorable night. They knew, that out of the whole list of Leaders, they had a great majority on their side; and they evidently appear to have thought, that the *accused* themselves would all vote in favour one of another; and thus they appear to have reckoned on triumphant success. For it never seems to have entered into their heads for a moment, that confederates in the same crime are ineligible to sit on the *jury* at the time when their confederates are tried; or, that, if twelve men commit theft and shed blood, *the eleven* may not be on the jury, at the trial of *one of themselves*; and so, in a regular series, till the whole have been tried. And hence these individuals called out for "*one at a time*," and insisted on being tried "*one at once*." And thus they would not allow me to go on to the second name on my list, till "*the meeting* (meaning themselves), had considered and decided concerning the first." And, because I did not submit to their wisdom, and allow them to be tried in this way, I am a tyrant, and have committed an outrage on "Christianity, on the laws of Methodism, and on British justice!" Thus, in their wisdom, they think, and thus they affirm. But although neither the Bible nor Methodism can teach them to think differently on these points, *British justice*, at least, we presume, would make some attempts to teach them better, if some things were carried into its courts which they have thought proper to do.

While I was putting on my hat and cloak in the vestry, in order to come away, the clamour of voices around me was as the waves of the sea. They called me all manner of names which they thought contemptible and vile, or which they were able to apply to me in a vile and contemptible sense, as that of *judge*, *pope*, and *hangman*; and one of them (Mr. Gordon) cried out to the immense mob in the chapel, who had all the while been responding to their voices, by *clapping* of hands, *bravos*, &c., just when I was beginning to face them, "let that *hangman* come QUIETLY past," in a manner and tone of voice which could only be understood as requesting them to ill-treat me. And I was not a little pressed and jammed against the gallery staircase while pressing with my strength to get through them, amidst hisses and sneers in abundance, and all kinds of contempt.

All this was on the Monday evening. And as I had to set out the next morning in order to attend our financial District Meeting, at Penrith, the business of Monday lay over till the Friday, when I was returning home again. On this day (Friday) I requested all the Leaders who were present on the Monday, and that had any right to vote on the case, to meet again; but at this time we met at my house, in order to be quiet and secure from the mob. I had some doubt on my mind at the time, and I still have much doubt whether, in the case of these men, one of them having pleaded guilty to two of the charges brought against him, and the others having refused to plead, it was at all necessary to take the sense of the Leaders' meeting, as to the fact of their innocence or guilt of the charges alleged against them. However, I did put it to them; and of the four Leaders present on the occasion (all who thought proper to come), three gave their voices against them, and the fourth requested to be neutral.

A week after this meeting the Leaders met again. And having, in the mean time, consulted with individuals upon the subject, I stated to the Leaders my intention to drop all their names, and so to have done with them for ever; or, at least, till such time as they became very different men. The day after, which was Saturday, I told most of them they were dismissed; that "we," and not "I," as the thing

had been falsely reported, "should no longer have any occasion for their services;" and I requested to have their class books, and the like, which they refused to give up. We had two written documents sent in to the Quarterly and Local Preachers' Meetings, containing the names of those persons who had been tried, but not formally acquainted with my decision, and other names with them; in which document they found great fault with me to the Local Preachers' and Quarterly meetings, *and formally withdrew themselves from communion with us*. These documents were treated by the Quarterly meeting just as they deserved. Not the least notice was taken of the one; and the other was replied to, by the Local Preachers, in a manner which did them credit. It is thought, by some of our friends, that the parties signing this document had no intention to withdraw; but were only aiming to produce an impression. But as they pretended to be all in good earnest, I took them at their word. And thus ended my Methodistical connexion with these unhappy men.

What these men have been doing since their trial and separation from us remains to be a little explained. In giving you some account of these things, we may begin with their doings on the Sunday they were expelled. That Sunday had been appointed to hold a lovefeast in our own chapel, at Whitehaven: but, in consequence of the unsettled state of things in the Society, and most of the classes not having been regulated or met, it was thought wise by myself, and the Leaders who still remained with me, to put off the lovefeast for the present. But when this was announced from the pulpit on the morning of that day, one of the party stood up in the front of the gallery, contradicting my colleague, Mr. Barrett, and telling the congregation that the lovefeast would be held in the afternoon; and the *radicals* accordingly held it, despite of my colleague and of me. But this was all fair and square, to be sure. It was the work of the Whitehaven Grand Centrals; and, therefore, it was sure to be good. Neither was there any thing *arbitrary* or *lordly* in this; nor was there any *tyranny* or *despotism*, in the whole matter. But one would like, Mr. Editor, at all events, to know one thing concerning the transactions of that day, namely—what became of the lovefeast collection? For if it was a Methodist lovefeast, as they pretended it to be at the time, the money arising therefrom should pass under account. But to this day I have not heard a whisper about it.

On the Sunday after this memorable lovefeast, I had arranged to give tickets to such Classes and Members of Society, as had not yet had an opportunity of having them renewed; and I published from the pulpit, on the morning, that I should meet them in the evening, after the service, and in the chapel; and that, in order to make way for this, the usual prayer-meeting in the chapel would that night be given up. But this arrangement was doomed to be respected just as our arrangement for the lovefeast. The radicals were not at our chapel during the time of the evening service; but had been spending the time elsewhere, in some place and service of their own. Faithful, however, to their purpose, and true to their own cause, which they had so zealously undertaken, the moment I had pronounced the benediction at the close of our public service, they made their appearance in a body at our chapel, walking up the aisle as our congregation was beginning to go down; which, when I perceived, I again gave out distinctly, in order to prevent them if possible, that the prayer-meeting would that night be given up. But the party having arrived at the place in the chapel where the prayer-meeting was usually held, instantly responded to my voice in an elevated tone, "*The prayer-meeting WILL be held as usual;*" and instantly they gave out a hymn. I believe they did not feel comfortable during the time they were singing. There was, a little conscience left. At least so I thought. But be that as it may till another day shall declare it, their lordships had taken possession, and I was compelled to look on; or, otherwise, go home. I preferred the former, determining not to be ignorant of what they might do. Among other things which they prayed for that night was this, "that "*Popery*" (meaning *Methodism*) "*might be brought down;*" that "*their ministers might have life,*" and the like; "*and be converted to God.*" And while this noisy and profane exhibition was going forward, a person from among them came past me in the aisle, where I was standing and looking on, and said to me, in reference to their proceedings, "*you see what you have done.*"

They continued this prayer-meeting about forty minutes. They then left the chapel; and, when they were gone away, I also went home. As I was coming out of the chapel-yard into the street, I was saluted with the epithet of "*blackguard,*" and told "*never to come there again.*"

On the Monday evening they took possession of our vestry when I wanted it for our own Leaders' Meeting; and they have continued to seize it in this way, so that I have been obliged to remove the Leaders' meetings into my own private dwelling-place at home, or do as I would. It was not to continue Leaders among us that they forced their way into our meetings, and drove us from our places. It was in direct

opposition to us and to Methodism. They were avowedly acting *for* the Association. Some of them had withdrawn themselves formally, and in a written document from us. And yet they came into our meetings, and drove us from our posts. And for all this their partizans believe them to be very good men, and to have characters unblameable and without reproach.

In the course of this week and the next, they proceeded to frame and to publish a plan of their own, and attempted to organize themselves into some kind of circuit. They still continued to use our chapels in Whitehaven for their prayer-meetings and class meetings, and, also, for their meetings for business; and they put it on their plan to hold a lovefeast and quarterly meeting in it on new year's day (the day on which our quarterly meeting is to be held in another part of the circuit), and seemed determined to occupy the pulpits in some other of our chapels, if we ourselves (the Travelling Preachers) do not, or if one who is not a Trustee is not appointed to be there. For, as two or three who were Local Preachers among us, happen to be Trustees, they fancied they had a right, or pretended, at least, to have a right, on the ground of their being Trustees, to occupy the pulpits at pleasure, whenever a Travelling Preacher was not appointed to preach. Accordingly, one of them went to Egremont, on Sunday, Oct. 11, and took possession of our pulpit at that place, displacing a Local Preacher whom I had appointed there to preach, and so preached in the morning; and he intended to preach there again in the evening of the same day, but was disappointed, our chapel-keeper locking the door during the interval of the two services, and refusing to open it at his bidding, so he could not get in, although he endeavoured for some time, and also got a workman to assist him, to pick or break open the lock. So, at last, he was compelled to go home mortified enough.

On the following Sabbath, Oct. 18, another of the party made a similar attempt at the same place, and in some degree at least, there is no doubt, he succeeded to his wish. In the course of the week I had been at Egremont, according to my week night appointment, and heard of the things which were done on the preceding Sabbath; and it was then agreed to have the chapel again locked up, in case any of them should come the next Sabbath, and so to have no service there till the afterpart of the day, when, according to our plan, it would be my turn to preach. They had planned Richard Gordon at Egremont that day, one of the most turbulent men they have among them, and a Trustee for that chapel. Accordingly, he was there in good time, but he found the door locked. Richard Gordon, however, was made of some metal—of that sort, I mean, which, in such a case as this, is not to be turned aside by a thing called a lock. He had set his heart on the *pulpit*, and having brought with him such men and such things as were needful for the purpose, he took them to the back of the chapel, and broke the pulpit window shutter to pieces. They then broke out the glass of the window, and got into the chapel; and, having drawn the bolts of the door in the inside, they then forced the lock. Gordon now ascended the pulpit, and was seen in the “fold of the sheep.” But how did he get into the “sheepfold?” Did he “enter in by the door; or, “climb up by some other way?” Perhaps Mr. Gordon himself, such is his zeal in *his* cause, may not now have time, nor perhaps inclination, to attempt to answer these questions, in any serious way. But there is a day coming in which the deeds of that day may arrest both his attention and heart, and spread themselves out in all their blackness before his sight. Mr. Gordon preached that morning, and staid in the pulpit or chapel (I believe in the former place), till the after part of the day, and had his dinner or refreshment carried to him in that place. I had to preach at Whitehaven in the morning; and, immediately after service in that place, I set out to Egremont, and found Mr. Gordon was still in the chapel when I arrived. I staid perhaps ten or fifteen minutes at a friend's house, and was told what Gordon had been doing in the morning, and that he was still in the chapel with his congregation. Thinking it might be of importance to see for myself what was going on, I went over way the into the chapel, and found the man in the pulpit with the Bible open before him and the hymn book in his hand, just in the act of giving out a hymn. I sat down a few seconds on one of the benches near the door; but feeling it would not be right to allow him quietly to go on, I walked up to the pulpit, opened the door, and requested him to come out. He insisted on his right, as a Trustee, to occupy that place, calling it “his property.” I told him “the pulpit was my property not his, and I would insist on his not preaching there.” He gave out his hymn, and attempted to raise the tune; but it certainly did not go well; and, in the meanwhile, I laid hold on the Bible to take it away, when he also laid his hymn book on the Bible and, with both his hands, attempted to retain both. I appealed to his *conscience*, if he had any, that he knew he was not doing right; and, using some little exertion, took both the books from his possession, laid them behind him in the pulpit, and insisted on his leaving that place. There were, perhaps, twenty or thirty people before him in the

chapel, and to these he now made an appeal, saying, "you see what sort of fellows they are." To which I replied, "I hope they do see, and will see; for I wish them to know that I do not intend you to *rob* me of my rights in this way, without any opposition. If I am wrong—if Mr. Gordon has any right to occupy the pulpit in this way, he can call me to an account. But I have the Deeds of this chapel in my pocket, and know that I am right. If any of you choose, *to-morrow* morning you shall examine the Deeds, and judge for yourselves" (for I happened to have brought the Deeds with me, in order to show them to Mr. Williams, who is one of the Trustees). Here, again, he appealed to the people. "Hear that," said he, "*he has the Deeds of my property.*" "The chapel," I said, "is not yours—it belongs to Methodism, and you only hold it in trust, *for* Methodist purposes; but you are now robbing Methodism of its rights, and betraying your trust, by appropriating this chapel to purposes which are directly opposed thereunto." Finding he could not succeed, he prayed a few words, and came down out of the pulpit; and so, walking out of the chapel, both he and his party went away.

In the afternoon when I went into the pulpit to preach, and opening the Bible, I found an outline or skeleton of the lecture which Mr. Gordon had been delivering to the people; and, as it may show you for what purpose he had *broken into a place of worship*, and *committed a theft* upon the pulpit, I will give it you in this place. The following are its order and words:—"Our grievances are connexional—no private pique against Mr. Watmough—object for which we are contending is to establish the authority of our Local Courts', Leaders', and Local Preachers' and Quarterly Meetings—in our expulsion Mr. Watmough has violated three most essential rules, 1, in not consulting the Leaders' meeting; 2, in not trying us before the Local Preachers' meeting; 3, in not trying us and proving our guilt before, and in the presence of, a Trustees' meeting—the Local Preachers will meet those of our friends who are willing to meet in the afternoons of their appointments here." I was not aware of the fact at the time, but I believe he had actually been lecturing them on these topics. And with what truth or propriety he could affirm *some* of those things, or why he should "contend" for the rest, those who know Methodism, and have perused the account herein given of the expulsions in question, may form an opinion for themselves.

Yours affectionately,

A. WATMOUGH,

Whitehaven, Nov. 1835.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

SIR—Whether any cause can be supported by low, mean, and scurrilous language, the public must judge, and time will determine. But if a cause be good in proportion to the subtle, mean, and delusive measures which are adopted to support it, the Association certainly must be one of the most excellent combinations which has been exhibited to the world. The editor of the *Lantern* is well versed in misrepresentation, many instances of which may be adduced of a most glaring character; however, in this paper I will only refer to one, which the editor seems to delight in re-publishing, as it has frequently been stated by him; but as the veracity of the *Lantern* is so low with the public, I suppose that no person has thought it worth notice.

In the last number, he again states that the Rev. G. Marsden, superintendent of the Liverpool South Circuit, said, that "a man might never read the word of God, use family or private prayer, attend public worship, class-meeting, or the Lord's Supper, and yet not be immoral." Now for the facts of the case.

A letter was sent to Mr. Marsden, signed by eight of the Leaders belonging to the Pitt-street Society, as also by some others, in which is the following sentence. "We deprecate excommunication on any grounds, except for gross immorality of conduct." In reference to that and other statements, they add in the same letter, "We have not adopted these conclusions hastily, but circumstances have forced them upon us, and we dare not refuse to act upon them." That letter was dated, February 12, 1835. In a little time after Mr. Marsden received the letter, in their zeal for the REFORM of Methodism, they published their NEW RULE to the world. Soon afterwards, at a Leaders' meeting which was held at Pitt-street chapel, and at which those Leaders were present, Mr. Marsden laid before the meeting the following rules of the Methodist Society:—

"It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation, by attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are—

"The public worship of God.

"The ministry of the word, either read or expounded.

"The Supper of the Lord.

"Family and private prayer.

"Searching the Scriptures, &c."

He then showed them that, according to their new rule, which they had published to the world—that if no person was to be expelled from the Society but “for gross immorality of conduct,” quoting their own words—it was not merely a rule to which the Methodist Connexion would not consent, but that a person, on their principle, might continue in Society who neglected the Lord’s Supper; searching the Scriptures, family and private prayer, and also might neglect their class; and yet, if not guilty of “GROSS IMMORALITY,” they would keep him in Society as a Member of the Methodist Body. And he clearly and strongly stated, that, by the Methodist rules, those who neglected these important duties could not be allowed to remain in our Society; but, according to *their* rule, a person might neglect them all—neglect his class, or be a socinian; and yet, if he was not grossly immoral, they would keep him as a Member. Mr. Marsden, therefore, required, that as they had adopted a new, unmethodistical, and unscriptural rule, and that rule had been published to the world with their names affixed, that they should as publicly announce their withdrawal of such rule; and in that requirement, the Leaders’ meeting united. The result was, that not one of those eight Leaders would withdraw the new rule which they had published.

So much for the veracity of the editor of the *Lantern*, as to who they are who declare that a person ought to remain in Society, who neglects those scriptural and important duties.—Mr. Marsden firmly maintained the Methodistical rules of church membership; those Leaders, with some others, have adopted one which certainly will allow of a very lax interpretation. But as in former secessions from the Methodist Body, time has proved the best interpreter as to the nature of their principles, so in this, we may leave it to the same interpreter.

Mr. Wesley somewhere remarks, “that the seceders from the Church of Scotland began by finding fault with the church from which they separated; but that the Methodists began with finding fault with themselves.” Any person who either reads the publications of the Association, or converses with one of its leading members, will soon discover that they have not commenced their career with finding fault with themselves, or speaking kindly and tenderly of the Body from whom they have seceded.

X.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

SIR—I need not inform you that the attempt made by some of the Trustees of the Rochdale chapel to desecrate that place of worship, by allowing Dr. Warren & Co. to hold a meeting in it; for the purpose of slandering and libelling the Conference (one of the parties concerned in the Trust Deed of that very chapel), has excited the surprise, and roused the indignation of the whole Connexion. In your article on the Rochdale case, you state that the Trustees “have the reputation of being somewhat sagacious, shrewd, and high-minded men.” An ingenious essay, Mr. Editor, might be written on the varied ways by which men contrive to obtain characters without deserving them. “By their fruits shall ye know them,” is one of those concise but infallible rules which our Lord laid down, to enable us to judge accurately of character. Some of these Trustees may have risen into opulence by their industry, and by taking proper advantage of the rise and fall in the prices of flannels, and sugar, and drugs; but the inference is not a necessary one—that they are “sagacious, shrewd, high-minded men.” We, at a distance, who can only form our judgment of them from their overt acts, should never have thought of giving them such designations. “Sagacious” men are acute in making discoveries; had they been so, they would have found out that his honour, the Vice-Chancellor could issue an injunction from Studley as easily as from his court, in London. Men of “shrewd” understanding are quick at distinguishing truth from falsehood; had they been so, they would instantly have detected the imposition practised upon them by some wily Associationist, that *because* they were Trustees—that is, held property committed to their care for the use and behoof of others—*therefore*, they might employ the chapel for any purpose they pleased. “High-minded” men would have regarded with scorn the first suggestion made to them to betray their trust, and thus forfeit their character for integrity. Granted, that in the immediate vicinity of Rochdale, they have hitherto sustained the character you mention, they will do so no longer. “Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom.”—Eccles. x. 1.

The firm resistance made by Mr. Sumner, his colleagues, and the Trustees who were “faithful among the faithless found,” entitles them to what I am sure they will have increasingly—the thanks and *support* of the Connexion: A principle of the greatest importance was involved in the conduct of these Rochdale Trustees, and the decision in their case applies universally; whether their office is merely *administrative*

to hold the property for the purposes specified in the Chapel Deed, and those only ; or whether, considering themselves as proprietors, they had a right to legislate as to what peculiar purposes it should be applied, beyond those specially named. If the right they endeavoured to establish were allowed, what guarantee have the Methodists that their chapels will not soon be used for any purpose—the most hostile even to religion and morality? Nor is the supposition that this would soon be the case, an outrageous one. Let the following *facts* be allowed to have their proper influence upon the question under discussion. You are aware, Mr. Editor, that during the late Conference in this town, the members of the Association and the self-elected delegates held their meetings in Surry-street chapel, which belongs to the "Wesleyan Protestant Methodists." Their official documents were dated, "Surry-street chapel." Mr. Gordon, and others of them, preached in it. The Protestant Methodists, you know, have manifested great sympathy with the Association, and an earnest desire to be one Body with them—in fact, they are so now virtually, if not formally. The Trustees of this notorious Surry-street chapel are at the present time allowing it to be used for almost any purpose, on those days when it is not occupied for religious services—of course, they are remunerated for their kindness. Any itinerant, orator, lecturer, or reformer, finds there a theatre, if the *fee* be forthcoming. A course of lectures on astronomy has lately been delivered in it. But what I am about to state nearly exceeds credibility. I copy, verbatim, from the large yellow placards, posted on the walls of the town:—"LECTURES ON SHAKSPEARE. Mr. Pemberton will prolong his course of lectures in *Surry-street chapel*, analytical and illustrative of some of Shakspeare's characters, by delivering one on Tuesday evening, Nov. 10, on Richard II. and Henry IV.; and one on Friday evening, Nov. 13, on King John. *Stranger's admission*, one shilling each lecture." Happy seat-holders! you are not strangers—the ticket for your pew will enable you to hear a sermon on Sunday, and a lecture on Shakspeare on Tuesday!

Such, Mr. Editor, is the practical working of a system in which every man seems to do what is right in his own eyes. If the Rochdale Trustees have the power for which they contended, to employ the chapel for meetings to agitate and destroy, under the pretence of reforming, Methodism, they have equally the power to allow Mr. Pemberton, or any one else, to lecture upon Shakspeare in it. They may revolt at the idea, and deem it impossible that *they* should thus act. So did Hazael when Elisha fortold him the enormities he would perpetrate upon the children of Israel—"Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?" but of every crime specified by the prophet was he soon guilty.

God is over-ruling the present agitations in Methodism, for the accomplishment of important ends. The Chancery decision in Dr. Warren's case has settled the question as to the rights of District Meetings, and the Vice-chancellor has now given an instructive monition to Trustees of chapels, that their office is administrative and not legislative, and that the great purposes for which the Wesleyans erected their places of worship and vested them in Trustees shall not be trampled upon with impunity. We have now the case fairly and practically before us: Trustees faithful to their charge—and the sanctuary of God unpolluted; Trustees violating their Deed, and assuming proprietorship, and then—"Lectures on Shakspeare," if they please, delivered in a Methodist chapel.

Sheffield, Nov. 12, 1835.

O. P. Q.

THE EJECTION OF JAMES LAMB FROM THE LIVERPOOL GRAND CENTRAL.

And is it at last come to this—that James Lamb, the popular and disinterested advocate of religious liberty, and the avowed enemy of Conference despotism, has received his dismissal from that Association, with which he declared himself willing to sacrifice life and health! Oh, the mutability of all human affairs! Our readers will remember we predicted this, and unequivocally declared our opinion, that many months would not elapse before James Lamb would be without work or home; and, before six months have passed, he has received a notice, that the lords of the Liverpool Association are prepared to dispense with his services!

Long have the Association been dissatisfied with their *venerable* and *heavenly-minded* pastor. During the negotiations which were carried on between them and the Rev. Robert Aitken, we saw to which quarter the wind was veering, and expected before this to have heard of his ejection. When the deputation visited the Isle of Man, composed, as it was, of two or three of the leading agitators, the Rev. Gentleman asked, what the Association intended to do with Lamb, should he accede to their pro-

by giving him three months' notice. This at once settled the case, and closed all further negotiation with such a company.

A feather serves to show the way of the wind. Not long ago, after preaching at the Music Hall, Lamb requested the committee of the Association to meet at the conclusion of the service, and, descending from the pulpit, very dispassionately took possession of the chair. This gave mighty umbrage to several of the Grand Centrals, who informed Lamb, in no very courteous terms, that although the Superintendents in the Old Body were lords paramount and took the chair *ex-officio*, they had thought fit to act differently, and a chairman was provided from among themselves. Poor Lamb was obliged quietly to sneak from the chair, and give place to the coffee-roaster of famous memory, we mean the *valiant* chairman of the Liverpool Association.

We are warranted in saying, the dissatisfaction between the pastor and the flock at the Music Hall has been mutual; Lamb has bitterly complained in many places of the dictatorial spirit of his constituents, whilst the ring-leaders of the agitators are determined to recognise no one as their minister, who will not acknowledge, that all ministerial power emanates from the people, and will submit to a practical exemplification of that principle in his own person and character. We are acquainted with much of the secret workings of the system, and know a great deal of the sentiments and conduct of the men above-mentioned, and also with many of the same fraternity, which we will not fail occasionally to *illuminate*. At the dictatorial treatment which James Lamb received, that *lamb-like* disposition, and temper, which he assumed at his first entry on the pastorate of the Music Hall was gradually displaced for those of an opposite cast, and fierce and numerous have been the altercations between the pastor and his flock! The strife and uproar which the Music Hall has again and again witnessed, have, in no degree, been harmonious; the fearful language and invectives to which utterance has been given, have resembled more the howlings of a den of wolves, than an association of persons for the *pious* purpose of effecting ecclesiastical reform. By and bye, the history and description of these dissensions became the *talk* of persons without, and therefore, to prevent further mischief and scandal—the poor Lamb must budge.

That James Lamb could long *brook* the dictation of the Liverpool Association committee, we never expected, whilst we were fully convinced, from what we know of the persons composing this committee, that if Lamb “kicked against the pricks,” he would be soon taught better manners. Lamb, by the committee, is considered *fair game*, upon whom they may exercise their domineering powers. Pity it is, they do not learn to confine the exhibition of these qualities among their own associates. Barnes, the public-house keeper of Dale-street, Liverpool, essayed to dictate to the Rev. Samuel Jackson, while at the Conference, in Sheffield, and actually summoned his *quondam* Superintendent, to appear before him in a Kilhamite chapel in that town, to answer certain questions which he intended to propose. The following is a verbatim copy of the publican's *subpana* :—

“King's Arms Hotel, Sheffield, August 6, 1835.

“SIR—As the circumstances connected with your conduct as Superintendent of the Liverpool North Circuit, will be made, in part, the subject to be submitted at the public meeting to be held in South-street chapel, to-morrow evening at Seven o'clock. Your attendance is therefore respectfully requested.

“I am, Sir, yours, &c.

“ANTHONY BARNES,

“Society Steward of the Liverpool North Circuit.”

This effusion of our host of the White Lion forcibly reminded us of a certain Khan of Tartary, who while he does not possess a single house under the canopy of heaven, has no sooner finished his repast of mare's milk and horse flesh, than he causes a herald to proclaim from his seat that all the princes and potentates of the earth have his permission to go to dinner!

But what will become of this poor shorn Lamb, is a question which his friends will probably thank us to answer. Something should be done, especially as persons who positions, and become the pastor of the motley congregation at the Liverpool Music Hall. The answer he received was this, that they could turn *him* adrift at any time,

profess to be weather-wise inform us, a hard winter is in prospect. To say nothing respecting the cruelty of the Association in turning a *Lamb* adrift, at this inclement season of the year, we should recommend that James Lamb throw himself under the protection of the *dear* Doctor, who may speak a word in his favour to the Kilhamite proselyting committee; and although he does not, as Joseph Forsyth, bring his "bread and cheese" with him, in the seduction of *eight hundred* members from the Old Connexion, they may be induced, in their great mercy, to take him on terms similar to those on which James Jones has now a place in that *very respectable* Body; for he cannot calculate now upon receiving another £200 from a Preachers' Fund. Poor fellow!

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We thank our Bramley correspondent for his communications. We can assure him that the poor, drudge of Kilhamitism, Joseph Barker, of Chester, whose contemptible scribbling, if possible, rendered more disgraceful than ever the miserable stuff which crowds the columns of the *Advocate*, has not escaped our notice. We have some acquaintance with him, and shall not allow him to insult or defame the characters of pious and honourable men with impunity, compared with whom he is unworthy to be named on the same day. His former lucubrations, if we may judge from the tone of his "last" in the *Advocate*, have given huge offence to some of the Kilhamitish Preachers, and now he would feign make the "*amende honourable*." This is what we expected, and sincerely hope he will learn wisdom by his late experience. His illiberal *slap-dash*, and reckless insinuations, destructive of the ministerial character and usefulness of Ministers in his *own* Connexion—to say nothing, at present, of the bitter and diabolical accusations against the Ministers and polity of the Wesleyan Body—show the awful spirit by which he is actuated. Pretty language for a Minister of the Gospel, forsooth! Some of his friends would palliate his folly by attributing his conduct to juvenile indiscretion!! Well, be it so; we shall therefore, endeavour to teach him discretion, by the application of our *birch*! By the bye, little did we imagine, until informed by this Joseph Barker that the cause of the great declension in several Societies of the New Connexion is justly attributed to the tipping and drunken habits of the superintendent Preachers appointed by their Conference!! Shame, shame!

Our correspondent "N. P.," who so kindly furnished us with an account of the proceedings of the London "Grand Central," (!) at the Kilhamite chapel, Dover-road, in London, has our best thanks.—We intend to make ample use of his communication. The inveterate and *unprincipled* hostility which the New Connexion has lately manifested toward the Old, and the mean, contemptible, and dishonourable efforts which are made to sow the seeds of discord in peaceful Societies, and to fan the flames of anarchy and confusion in a few places of the Wesleyan Connexion, through the machinations of their "Annual Committee," have excited unmeasured feelings of shame and disgust in almost all classes of the religious public. Pity that such men as Thomas Allin are not employed in a way more consistent with their hallowed profession! If we are credibly informed, Mr. Allin is already reaping the reward of his inconsistency. That the Kilhamites in London should be anxious for their new chapel being occupied by the "Grand Central," we are not surprised. Although recently erected, it is well known to be a sinking concern; and the probability that some unsettled, disaffected Wesleyan might be induced to take a *sitting* (we say nothing of pews!) in that chapel, was a sufficient bait. We could mention another *new* chapel, *used* by the New Connexion, not one hundred miles from the place where we write, the debt upon which is tremendous—the congregation is miserably small—and the building is three times larger than the necessities of the case required; where, to obtain hearers, the most proselyting schemes have been concocted. But we forbear.

Communications have been received from O. P. Q.—Delta—Abraham Watmough—Epsilon—A Lover of Methodism as it is.

ERRATUM.—The following erratum escaped our notice until a few copies of this number were printed:—The last two lines in page 351 should begin that page.

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Rev. David Evans, Sec. of the Connexion

THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION ;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES ; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY ; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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THE PROSPECTS OF METHODISM.—No. 2.

THE PEOPLE.

IN the absence of a theocracy, or of express miracles, the chief security of religious communities must depend on the spirit and opinions of the people. Without their attachment and support, the name, forms, and polity of churches may continue; but, like a castle abandoned by its inmates, they remain in antiquated and forsaken solitude. Many of the Presbyterian places of worship retain their old and venerable forms of worship, but since they have admitted the Socinian heresy to take the place of the orthodox sentiments of their fathers, the people have deserted them, and they now present a scene of cold and mournful solitude—like the vaults of the dead. So it must be in all similar cases; and if it could be shown that the classes, properly constituting *the people* of the Wesleyan Societies, were alienated from the constitution, we should despair of its preservation.

From the secessions which have taken place at different periods, and the movements at present going on amongst us, a stranger would imagine that the Connexion is destined to be broken into fragments, and that, in a short period, not a wreck would appear on the stream of time. That such a catastrophe is possible, must be readily admitted; and we allow, that a false estimate of our position, erroneous notions of the confidence and attachment of the people, and the consequent indulgence of ill-founded hopes, may be inducing causes of a precipitate downfall. We are under no temptation to allow ourselves, intentionally, to take a wrong estimate of the opinions, character, and spirit of the Societies; and we would not willingly lead others astray. The questions in dispute have been before the public for several months; the leaders of the agitation have used their utmost efforts to rouse and divide the Connexion; they have succeeded to a certain extent; and it is of consequence now, to ascertain the feeling and spirit of the *people* as respects the leading and primary principles of Methodism.

We have no doubt but the great majority of the Members of Society are heartily attached to the Body on account of its *economy and communion*.

It stands out in bold relief, as distinguished in some of its features from all other forms of Christianity. While it embraces all the essential doctrines of the gospel, and the modes of worship in common with other Christian churches, it possesses some things peculiar to itself. The amount of value put on this edifying and, on the whole, unique economy, may be estimated from the fact, that when ambitious men have risen up, and by clamour and agitation succeeded in establishing a new party, for the sake of placing themselves at its head, they have always been obliged to retain the forms of the Wesleyan economy, to render their schemes palatable to the people they seduce. It is a singular incident in the history of these separations, that, with the exception of the one in London, many years ago, headed by Maxfield; and the one in Dewsbury, by Atlay, we do not recollect that any have adopted the purely Independent scheme of government. In these cases, an attempt was made to form the people into church communion on this model; but the attempt being made after they had been accustomed to the Methodist order, in each case it failed of permanent success, and these churches have now been extinct many years. This fact speaks volumes, in proof of the attachment of the body of the people to the forms and institutions of Methodism. The New Connexion, the Primitive Methodists, and other separatists, have, with various modifications, retained the Wesleyan polity. We have no doubt but the present seceders will do the same, and either unite with some of the communities already separated from the primitive stock, or otherwise adopt a system of their own, embracing the peculiar usages of their old companions and associates.

This fact, amongst others, shows very clearly that the successful propagation of the doctrines and opinions of Mr. Wesley, has made a deep and permanent impression on the public mind. This is not a matter of surprise, because the sentiment stands associated with the most triumphant progress of religion in modern times; and forms of thought, and affectionate attachment to institutions, which originate in religious feeling, take hold of the moral faculties, and assume all the force of principle.

The Connexion must enjoy the benefit of this at the present time, and we are persuaded, that it will be no easy task to shake the affectionate attachment of the great body of the people to institutions which stand identified with their religious existence, and all their pious associations. This feeling is not mere prejudice. The whole superstructure of Methodism is a defined, tangible, and visible object. It lies within the observation, and is open to the judgment, and, consequently, reasonable, and well understood regard and confidence of all its disciples. It is easy to apprehend many of the grounds of that attachment which, we are persuaded, the great majority of the Societies bear to the system of Methodism.

The fellowship and communion existing in the Wesleyan Connexion is now, probably, the greatest in the world, with the exception of national churches. Considered in connection with a merely personal enjoyment of the blessings of religion, it may be as safe and happy to belong to a small and isolated Society, as to a large and extended communion. No doubt, thousands of pious and spiritually-minded Christians are living in fellowship with Independent and other churches, who, in the quiet seclusion of a retired life, are cultivating the graces of religion, and exhibiting in domestic, village, and rural society, all the purity and charity of genuine piety. But, besides the personal enjoyment of the privileges of the gospel, it is of its spirit and genius to produce an ar-

dent zeal to extend and communicate that which is given. This proselyting spirit is, in truth, the genuine spirit of Christianity; and where it is absent, we may be certain that the pulse of spiritual life beats low. In the freshness of virgin piety, the feelings of the heart are always in accordance with the enlarged and boundless charity of the gospel. As divine grace expels the selfish passions of the heart, so it elevates the soul to a fervent desire for the triumphs of the cross, the glory of God, and the conversion and happiness of all mankind. In a large community there is something, especially favorable to the gratification and growth of this class of virtues. The only conceivable danger is, lest, while the means are afforded for the developement of piety and benevolence on a large scale, temptation should be presented to neglect the cultivation of personal religion. In no church on earth is this danger more effectually guarded against than in the Wesleyan Societies. The weekly meetings for Christian fellowship, universally existing, are indeed expressly intended to lead to self-examination and the diligent cultivation of the religion of the heart. To strengthen the faith—to purify and elevate the affections—to promote purity of life, as well as to afford relief in the midst of spiritual conflicts and trials, are the ends proposed by the "*communion of saints*," established in the Societies. The special and experimental nature and obligations of personal religion, are not sacrificed to the promotion of general objects, but those general objects are made to rest, in their efficiency and obligations, on personal religion. No one is taught to substitute indefinite and general zeal and charity in the support of the institutions of the Connexion, in the place of justifying grace, the new birth, the sanctification of the soul, and the love of God; but to make these blessings the basis of a practical dedication of himself to the noble and sublime objects of the gospel.

Then, when the important enjoyments of personal religion are fully provided for, it must be considered a great advantage to be united to a large community of Christians, as it affords the means on a large scale of giving expression to sentiments of truth, and feelings of charity. On this principle, supposing the opinions and feelings of the individual are in unison with those of the Body, he is enabled to give scope to them to the extent of the community itself. For instance, supposing a person who has himself been justified by faith, feels, as he must do, that this great doctrine is of essential importance in the Christian scheme; that the knowledge of it is necessary to the salvation and renovation of the world; that the state, triumphs, and prospects of Christianity must depend on its being fully and clearly announced; and that, as there is no other way by which sinners can return to God, in a large community holding this sentiment, he is enabled to contribute in teaching this great and capital truth to the extent of the Society's operations. We choose to put the question in this light rather than any other, because in this it is of most moment. In promoting the preaching of justification by faith, in connexion with its cognate truths and privileges in an independent church, a person contributes his influence to the support of this doctrine, to the extent of the congregation and the voice of the minister. This is the case in a limited Connexion, such as those which have been formed by the secessions from our own; whilst he who is supporting the Wesleyan Society is giving his countenance to extend this saving verity to the full dimensions of its establishment. To glory in the largeness of the Connexion merely because it renders a name and a party respectable, or lays the foundation of a particular form of church polity, or extends the influence of the Conference and the

Preachers, is not a feeling in which we indulge, or incite in others ; for it is bigoted and sectarian : but we do glory in the fact that it secures the proclamation of the precious doctrines of the cross, on a large and magnificent scale. Now, every true Christian must feel pleasure in contributing to extend, as far as possible, that truth which led to his own salvation, and which, he feels assured, is the only truth which can become the means of saving others. Without intending to derogate from the value, piety, and respectability of any other Christian church, we are bold to affirm, that no good man can have the same security that the vital doctrines of the gospel will be preached on so large a scale by his union with, and support of, any other people. He is not the Preacher, it is true, but he gives his countenance—his prayers—his support to a system which, as one of its fundamental principles, makes provision for the teaching of these verities in every quarter of the globe, and actually does so on a wider scale than any other church on earth. In this a pious man finds his greatest satisfaction. He knows that there is no end to debate on little and litigated points of polity ; and change the external forms of the Wesleyan economy as often and much as possible, he would only be moving from one point of the compass of agitation to another. But in the fact that he belongs to a community which is extending the salvation of Christ to the whole family of man he finds his solace and his joy. He feels and knows this to be of immeasurably greater consequence than the settlement of some fifty or five hundred litigated questions of church polity, all terminating on one point ; and while the would-be philosophers and legislators who have left the Society, grope in the murky region of strife and debate, he delights to belong to a Connexion whose chief aim is to proclaim the Saviour.

Besides the testimony for Christ which the Members of the Wesleyan Community are instrumentally bearing to so great an extent, and supporting a polity which proposes, as its primary object, the universal enunciation of the saving doctrines of the gospel, the *extent* of the fellowship is calculated to elevate the mind to a noble *catholicism* of feeling and of charity. The mind is much influenced by the circumstances in which it is placed. It revolves in a little or great orbit, as it is circumscribed and limited in its sphere of knowledge and action ; or as it is placed in an elevated position, and enjoys the means and opportunities of associating in great and sublime movements.—Piety, principle, and love, have their innate existence and influence on the mind, and no doubt, the element of all the strength, purity, and benevolence of character is laid in this ; but still, the re-action from circumstances must be great, and experimental wisdom and piety must have their developement, according to the enlarged or limited sphere in which the mind moves. However strong and vigorous the intellectual powers may be, if the soul is left to prey on itself, without suitable opportunities of exertion, it is found, that an entire prostration of mental strength, and often a consuming melancholy ensues ; whilst, on the other hand, facilities for the employment of the talents imparted, not only give great tact and expertness, but also tone, elevation, and power to the faculties themselves. In like manner, when the great privileges of the gospel are attained, the new creation takes place in the soul, and the wonderful field of scriptural truth and religious duty are first opened to the new-born Christian, an impulse of universal love is felt in the bosom, and there is a tender and prayerful solicitude to extend the divine glory and to be instrumental in doing good to man, on the widest possible scale of operation. The growth and exercise of these fine feelings must depend very much on the position in which the youthful convert is placed. If he happen to unite himself to a community formed on a limited and sectarian plan, whose chief and only purpose is to maintain their own views, as a party—screw the gospel down to the dimensions and scale of their little platform—repudiate all others, who carry on their operations on an enlarged and more evangelical plan—and consume all their energies in working from the broad and universal circumference of our great catholic Christianity, to the little centre of their own church, where bigotry sits enthroned, in the midst of the chills and frost of its own polar regions ;—then he is likely to fall under the same influence, and the warmth of his first love to be frozen up by the cold and comfortless associations in which he is placed.

Little communities, whether civil or religious, tend to stultify the growth and expansion of noble sentiment, and produce a series of interminable jealousies and contentions. This state of things is easily accounted for ; for, possessing no principles which *legitimately* lead to enlarged enterprise *without*, an *internal* state of excitement and debate exists in the community itself. The only relief to this self-immolation is found in an incessant *guerilla* warfare carried on against other portions of the church. Religion is an active and stirring principle, and when means are afforded it to move in its right direction, it blesses its possessor and the world in which it unfolds its charities ;

but, when accident throws it into a false position, and it becomes the fuel of party and sectarian feeling, it is hateful. It is uniformly found, that the lesser sects are the most pugnacious and quarrelsome. They seem only to consider their concentration valuable as it affords the means of annoyance to all their neighbour Christians; and like some of the canine breed, they make up for the diminution of their size by the incessant reiteration of their bark. This is an unfortunate position for a Christian. The genuine feeling which ought to be cultivated, is that of love; but here, hatred takes its place, and, under the garb of zeal for religion, it is often found, that the most dark and rancorous misanthropy finds its congenial lurking place, and scope for its gratification.

When this external warfare is not going on, it is found that the sectarian spirit preys upon itself, and a state of internal discord is the consequence. It may be said that we are exactly describing the state of the Wesleyan Societies. No; neither part of the description holds respecting the Connexion, in its own legitimate spirit and operations; and any thing of a contrary nature and tendency, is alien to its genius. Instead of being constituted to carry on a war of assault against the other churches of Christ, it recognizes their rights—leaves them in free possession of their own opinions and modes of polity and government, with no other interference than that of friendly and fraternal regard and assistance, whilst all her aggressive energies are devoted to the conversion of sinners and the extension and triumphs of the gospel through the world. Individual feeling and conduct of an opposite tendency may have manifested itself; but this is against, and not in accordance with, the system. Would we could say the same respecting some of the parties who have intermeddled in our recent disputes. We know that the higher and more respectable portions of the dissenting churches, both ministers and laity, not only preserve a perfect neutrality, but utterly detest and abhor the spirit now manifesting itself against the Wesleyan body. But we equally know that, in unison with some of the hereditary *haters* of our cause, many of the lesser grades have not only manifested a deep sympathy with the agitators, but have aided and abetted to the utmost of their power, in carrying it on.

But it may be asked, is not this state of internal strife an essential and necessary element of the fellowship? We believe not; but just the opposite; and whenever those disturbances originate, they do so from the sectarian spirit, and are produced by other than inherent causes. And the fact, that in every instance in which this leaven has manifested itself it has been opposed, confronted, and ultimately purged away, proves most fully, that it does not find a congenial home in Methodism—that the two forces are in deadly hostility to each other—and that, hitherto, the catholic spirit has been enabled to repel the sectarian. Who can doubt for a moment the connexion of party and anti-patriotic politics, with the formation of the New Connexion, and also of the present movement? In the first case, instead of Methodism generating the principles of the faction, they were borrowed from the French philosophy and the agitations of the day; whilst every thing going on at the present movement demonstrates, most fully, that the fungus of democracy, which has fastened itself on all tangible objects in the country, whether civil or religious, is that which now infests the Wesleyan community. The great object of all these movements is, to expel the spirit of John Wesley from his own system; to break up the Community into little fragments, manageable by the leaders of the party; and, as their writings more and more show, to place the whole on the side, and to the account of, religious and civil democracy. The effect of this would, of course, be, to annihilate the federal form of our communion and reduce it, in reality, to the diminished size of separate churches, having no effective fellowship with each other.

We are persuaded, the great body of the people prefer their present Connexional form. They do so not merely on account of the abstract qualities of the economy, but on account of its influence on their feelings and character, as well as its agreement to their principles and views. They are wise in this. It is much more profitable to be placed in a situation where the mind may expand in co-operating in the plans and movements of a great religious enterprise, than to consume its energies in petty and party strife. Whilst the one state is calculated to narrow the soul into a sour, sullen, cynical and censorious bigotry; the other is calculated to expand, strengthen, elevate, and draw out its powers into a catholic and universal charity. The present race of Methodists have imbibed too much of the genuine spirit of the system in which they have been trained, to exchange it for the narrow and sectarian model presented to their acceptance. Men who have breathed in an expanded atmosphere—walked at large on the earth—regaled their senses by the beauties and fragrance of an extended landscape—and been interested in the best productions of nature—are not likely to exchange this state of existence for an isolated abode, beneath a sultry sun, in some little island of the sea. So, those who have imbibed the true spirit of Methodism, ranged in the midst of its great communion, and exercised their gifts, talents, and affections on the scale of its operations, cannot be satisfied with the narrow enclosures

and petty objects marked out for them by the spiritual draughtsmen of the Association and their compeers in mutilation.

And to set aside, for the present, all reference to the constitution and laws of the Connexion, it must be felt, by all considerate persons, that there is a much greater probability of enjoying a state of positive and practical freedom of mind in a large than in a limited communion.

Besides conventional and prescriptive liberty and bondage, there exists, in all societies of men, an *intangible spirit* of freedom or slavery, often much more substantial than that which rests on enactments of law. Institutions, denominated free, sometimes exist, whilst, in the positive order of things, opinion, choice, and habit, are so interfered with as to produce a state of galling and irritating bondage. This form of despotism is much more annoying than some others having the name. The northern States of the American Union have emancipated the negro and black population many years ago; but, whilst the law has set them free, custom and practice have debarred them all intercourse with society, the enjoyment of civil rights, and the advantages of property;—so that, though free in law, they are slaves in fact. We only refer to this in illustration of what we mean by the possible existence of a positive state of galling bondage, in the midst of institutions of a liberal nature. If the testimony of many of the seceders from our Societies at different times and places is to be credited, they, too, have found that the *spirit* of religious republicanism has proved itself much more troublesome and intolerant, than obedience to the simple and well-defined Rules of the Wesleyan Body. Indeed, as a general principle, the only security a community, whether civil or religious, can have against the aggressions of petty tyranny, so abundantly indulged in by the demagogues of liberalism is in the protection of equitable law and well-defined institutions. At first sight it may seem strange, that, in a religious community, a system of discipline and institutional regulations, should be essential to their peace and liberty. Anomalous, however, as the matter may appear, it is borne out, as to its necessity, by the fact that the great and Divine founder of the church has seen fit to leave a written code for its instruction and government. Instead of considering the religious principle and feeling communicated to the heart by conversion to be, in itself, sufficient for the guidance of his disciples, he deemed it necessary to superadd the instructions of his word. Hence the *principle* of a faith, experience, and practice, founded on a prescribed rule, is furnished by the highest gift of God to man—the bestowment of the Holy Scriptures. The discipline of the church, of course, ought to embrace the rules of Scripture. There can exist no fixed and steady state of liberty in any community, but by an adherence to these rules. In their absence, every man does what is right in his own eyes. With no great amount of intelligence; no very high regard for the courtesies and civilities of polished life; blessed with no very profound views and knowledge of reciprocal rights and privileges; and, withal (though, perhaps, sincere Christians, and, had they humility to keep in their own place, useful ones too); not free from human passion, pride, and infirmity, it is certain that this *independence* of all rule and order, though having the semblance of liberty, is a state of intolerable encroachment on the freedom of others. Of the capacity of the little communities which separate from our Connexion to judge of the best mode of securing a state of well-balanced liberty, we have a tolerable proof in the fact, that it is always found, that one of their first acts is to create an indefinite number of officers, without any adequate functions. This circumstance is in itself a pretty strong proof of the spirit in which our divisions originate. They are invariably *jobs*, got up by splanetic, aspiring, and ambitious men; and, instead of being favourable to scriptural, or, indeed, any other kind of freedom, they always end in the thralldom of the unhappy dupes of the delusion. Can any thing on earth be farther removed from a state of real freedom than one of these dissentient bodies filled with official lordlings, constantly clamouring about liberty, whilst, in fact, a system of intrigue is constantly carried on by every aspirant for fame or power. Many of the Leeds and London separatists, who had, in an evil hour, yielded to temptation and left their brethren, soon came to their senses; and, we are informed on good authority, declared, that the discipline and government of the Body was the perfection of freedom, when compared with the intolerable oppression and tyranny of the new system. So, we have no doubt, it will be again; and, if the present Association will only abandon agitation for legislation and government, their disciples will soon perceive that the two things are very different; and, instead of having their liberties infringed by the rules and administration of the Connexion, it is a perfect *elysium* of freedom and happiness, compared with the domination exercised over them by their new masters.

The blinding excitement of the moment prevents many of the people from perceiving the posture in which they are placing themselves; but persons of reflection and reading, who have been enabled to preserve any thing like an equilibrium of judg-

ment and feeling, rightly estimate the advantages of their communion with a Connexion resting on well-understood principles and rules of reciprocal right. The mutual recognition of these rights, in fact, constitutes the essence of freedom, supposing them to be just in themselves. Assuming, for the present, that the Wesleyan economy is founded on an equitable and scriptural division of power amongst the Preachers, other officers, and the people, then the acknowledgment of these several powers, harmoniously exercised, is the most perfect system of liberty. Freedom without law is savagism, and freedom *under law* pre-supposes the justice of the law itself; and its firm and faithful, as well as mild and lenient administration.

In the present pastoral administration of discipline by the Preachers, checked and controlled by the local meetings, the best security which can be desired exists for equitable dealing with all parties. This arises out of the separation of the Preachers from the other officers and the people, and their being held responsible for the free and faithful discharge of the functions of their office. The separation of the judge from all other classes of his majesty's subjects, and his entire devotedness to judicial duties, is considered favourable to the pure administration of justice, and also to the liberty of the subject. So it is amongst ourselves respecting the pastoral office. The Ministers of the Connexion have a direct and express interest in the prosperity and happiness of the entire body of the people; and, being generally strangers in the Circuits where they travel, and moveable at the end of two or three years, they can have fewer temptations to a partial and a mal-administration of rule than any other class of men could possibly have. When the administrators of discipline are constantly resident; are the companions and friends, and, often, the relations of many of the people; and, especially, when under the influence of those strong prejudices and passions which are always produced by local disputes, it would be next to impossible to secure a fair, candid, and equitable administration. Besides, those who are at all acquainted with the religious world, know well, that in many places the Societies are divided on some frivolous ground or other, and the Minister holding, the balance between the disputants, is appealed to by both parties. We are persuaded many Societies are held together by the solitary influence exercised by this third party, till time having been afforded for passion to cool, and the judgment and piety of the parties to rectify itself, an amicable agreement follows. In the absence of this salutary influence, the two parties would have to adjust the matter between themselves, and the consequence would be, that in every case, the stronger would triumph and the weaker go to the wall. What would become of the principles of true liberty in such a state of things? It is an extremely difficult thing for persons residing permanently in a place, and constantly mixing with local matters, so to maintain their independence of thought and judgment, as to be perfectly impartial. Ministers may, it is true, have many temptations to party prejudices and feeling; but, for the reasons already stated, namely, that they are strangers, can only remain for a short period, and belong to a separate order of officers, and are strictly amenable for the faithful fulfilment of their duties, they cannot be so exposed as others; and, consequently, their situation is the best security which can be afforded that justice will be done, and freedom secured. In the art of government it is always held, that public officers, acknowledged and received as the authorized administrators of the laws of the community, and held responsible to some competent power, is most favourable to public justice and freedom. This principle obtains in the Wesleyan Body, and a Superintendent set apart to his office, bearing its responsibilities both before God and man, watched and guarded by Trustees and Leaders, who have it in their power at any time, to arraign him before a competent tribunal, on any alleged offence against the rules of the Body; we say, such a provision for the administration of discipline is a much greater security for the liberty of the Members of Society, than the *pell mell* government of a large number of officers standing on an equal footing, when the stronger party are certain to crush the weaker, and their only remedy is in a new separation.

We are convinced that the great body of the people perceive all this, and on this ground, as well as others, prefer the Old Connexion to *experimenting* amongst the adventurers of the day; and, if all history is not a fable, and all experience a cheat, the time is not very distant when, with the exception of the Leaders who profit by the fray, those who have left the Societies and placed themselves under the new *regime* will be convinced that Methodism is the region of true freedom, and their new abode, the prison house of a petty despotism. A greater and fouler libel was never attempted to be fixed on any men than that which charges the Wesleyan Ministers with tyranny over the people, or any other design or intention to interfere with their freedom or interests, otherwise than to promote them. But this is a part of the flippant falsehood of the day. When the British constitution had wrought up the country to an unexampled state of wealth, power, means of enjoyment and happiness, knowledge, refinement, and freedom; and, moreover, had given her an attitude of greatness and

an influence amongst the nations never attained before, it suited the demagogues, and radicals, to decry this very instrumentality as itself rotten and corrupt! So, in like manner amongst ourselves, the Methodist system in its different departments of operation, its ministers, its schools, and other agencies have unitedly been successful in elevating an indefinite number of persons to a state of knowledge, faith, and professed enjoyment of religion, and when it had conferred on them all which the means of religion had to give, they begin to bawl out that the system is rotten, corrupt, despotic; nay, worse than popery. This is just as if some grumbling upstart tradesman in London, who, when he arrived there, was penniless; but by the successful prosecution of business now inhabits a splendid villa, rolls in his carriage, and ranks among the higher classes of society, should, notwithstanding, in consequence of an insatiable avarice and discontent against providence, unite in every *jacobin* ebullition to decry the country which had raised him to his eminence. This is the exception to the rule. The greater number of our people know well the advantages they enjoy; and, whilst others spurn the kind hand which raised them from a state of ignorance and ungodliness, and, instrumentally, placed them on that elevation they now so ungratefully occupy—they retain their better feelings, and are thankful to God for all they possess.

Besides attachment arising out of a cordial admiration of the system of Methodism, great numbers of the people give it their preference in consequence of its long-tried utility. Although it cannot boast of antiquity, yet it has been before the world for a century; and in that period of time it has, at least, had a fair trial; and its moral achievements have been equal, if not superior, to any other instrumentality contemporary with itself. The rage for novelties is, confessedly, very great; but still, there is a large class of sober and thoughtful persons who prefer a well and long-tried order of things, to the ever-shifting and ephemeral theories of fanciful or ambitious men. Who has not felt the force of Johnson's beautiful reflections on visiting Iona?—"We were now treading that illustrious island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions; whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge, and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion, would be impossible, if it were endeavoured; and would be foolish, if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses—whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future, predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me, and from my friends, be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us, indifferent and unmoved, over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona." Associations of deep and thrilling interest must unite to attach many persons to Methodism. We are not among those who despise these feelings, but consider them as belonging to the refinements of our nature and the sentiments of religion. Every community of men must have its patriarchs, its leaders, and, if not its martyrs, yet its benefactors and heroes. This is the case in our own Body; and more elevated piety—resplendent talents and wisdom—enlarged charity and benevolence—devoted and zealous labours, as well as heroic fortitude and perseverance—were never given, for the instruction of descendants, than have been handed down to us by our illustrious fathers. Who can read their biography, mark their footsteps through the world, contemplate the fruit of their labours, and stand by the side of their graves, without deep emotion—veneration for their character, and pleasure and delight to be considered their followers? Institutions live in the recollection and esteem of ages and generations posterior to their existence, not merely on account of their own qualities of excellence, but chiefly through the fame of those who have founded and supported them. It is impossible that the present unprincipled attempt to throw discredit on the institutions of Methodism should extensively succeed, much less their total overthrow and ruin be effected, when they are upheld by the names and example of so many illustrious men. In all attempts to poison the public mind, to alienate its confidence, to persuade it to believe that Methodism is a system of popery, and to call up its assistance to its demolition, they will recollect that this is the religion of Wesley, of Fletcher, of Grimshawe, of Coke, of Benson, of Clarke, of Drew, of Watson, of Butterworth, of Thompson, and a countless host of men who were, in their day, the ornament of the Christian name, the friends of humanity and of their country; and who now live in the knowledge and estimation of the public, some by their writings, and others by their works of beneficence. The radicals may write in newspapers, and fill the world with pamphlets, but they will not succeed to any extent in getting the ear of men on the subject of our economy; they will, with instinctive sagacity, conclude, that a Connexion which has been ornamented by the wisdom, talents, piety, and labours of men of the highest respectability, and long known to the world, cannot be the monstrous thing which the *little* demagogues are representing it to be. Not merely are the intellec-

tual labours of these men before the world in their writings, but their pious and charitable achievements as well. These exist now in means provided for public worship—the education of the poor—the preaching of the gospel through this nation and the world—and in the establishment of every institution tending to promote the religious and civil happiness of the nation and the world. And who is Dr. Warren, and his buzzing and noisy disciples?—the world will ask, in astonishment. We never heard of him before. The Wesleyan ministers and friends have taken their full share in the great movements going on in the church, but we never heard of his zeal, enterprize, eloquence, and devotedness, till now. They will attribute his present conduct to its right motive; and the agitators may be assured that the public is not so easily gulled as they imagine. It may suit some of the sects to co-operate with them in their cause, for purposes of their own; but as to the principles and the character of the parties themselves, they may make their account to be held in unmixed contempt by every man of honorable feeling in the country.

The long-tried excellencies of the system of Methodism, and the men who have been its ornament and support, will be one of the chief means of its preservation in the storm. It is beyond the possibility of even human mutability of sentiment and attachment, that any but selfish and ambitious men, and their dupes, should prefer the companionship of the agitators, and the chaotic, fruitless, foaming and formless mass of absurdity which their united genius has, by its first act, produced, to the Wesleyan fellowship and the constitution under which they live. It would indeed be strange if any but men warped by ambitious or party feeling, should be found to repudiate a Connexion which has stood the trials of a hundred years—presents to its disciples the richest and clearest written theology in the world—provides ordinances of the most edifying nature, to nurture their piety—can present a long list of varied and pious example—has done more to spread Christianity through this country and the world than any other Body—and can point to a series and succession of triumphs among heathen nations of the most animating description; we say, it would be an inexplicable phenomenon in human frailty, if any but interested persons could abandon this Society, for the Association.

But, as the great end of communion with the Wesleyan Body is spiritual and religious, so the principle most to be depended on in the attachment of the people is of the same description. Most of them have been converted to God by its instrumentality.—This produces a strong and sacred affection. The change is so important, and is associated with so many interesting feelings and hopes, that the means employed by God in bringing it about, can never be reflected upon but with deep emotion of gratitude and love. How should it be otherwise? Attachment to a church which has been instrumental in leading us to the faith and salvation of the gospel, is a species of piety towards God; because it has been employed by *His* Spirit to impart the privileges of *His* grace. When men living in a state of ignorance, guilt, and depravity, have found God—or rather, have been found of Him—in any particular community; have obtained the remission of sins—received the principles of a new nature, in regeneration—been led to enjoy fellowship with God, and to taste all the happiness of reconciliation and assurance; as the state itself is one of the highest possible importance, so it will create feelings (we do not say, of fastidious and passionate, but) of conscientious and well-principled attachment to the divinely-selected instrumentality by which it has been accomplished. This must, in the nature of things, exist to a large extent in our community. Without any extensive patronage or countenance from the public—any rich and splendid endowments—any great pretensions to the higher and more ornamental branches of learning and literature—any dazzling, attractive, and meretricious ornaments to captivate the senses—or, any worldly and civil distinctions by which to advance the interests of her disciples, Methodism has chiefly, and indeed, only, had to depend on the truth she taught and the saving effects it produced on the souls of those who embraced it. These effects, for a century, have been most extraordinary. By the force of the truth and the influence of divine grace, the Societies have not only been constantly augmenting, but that which is of more difficult attainment, they have been preserved. The great and only element of this is religion. The voice of God has awakened the tens of thousands now constituting these Societies to a sense of their lost state as sinners! The mercy of God in Jesus Christ has conferred on them the privileges of justifying grace and adopting love! The power of God, through the Holy Spirit, has created them anew in Christ Jesus! Methodism is a moral creation, in which all the great provisions, principles, and agencies of the kingdom of God are seen in harmonious, but vigorous operation. And as in nature, the plastic power of the Creator's will is essential to preserve the otherwise repulsive bodies in a state of unity; in like manner, the Spirit of God, who is the *real* author of all experimental religion, in his influences of wisdom, power, and love, is essential to the continuance of a work

of grace amongst a people. This, in the main, has been secured. The separations arising out of change of sentiment, declensions in experience, conformity to the world, and ambitious, factious, and party designs, have hitherto left the Body in both its compactness and efficiency. We attribute this to the spirit of vital religion which still lives and breathes in the system; and as long as it remains, a conserving power exists, which will not only repair the wastes and desolations occasioned by the frailty and sin of its professed adherents, but will also increase its strength and multiply its triumphs. There is infinite delicacy in the tastes of a spiritual nature, as there is great accuracy of discernment in a mind retaining the vigour of its faith, and the freshness of its love. To persons in this state, one of two things must be done before they can be led astray. They must be led into a state of sin, and thus have their spiritual faculties benumbed and brutalized; or, otherwise, they must be rendered discontented, and have the promise of some higher and richer spiritual provision made for their entertainment. How often, in imitation of the old mode of allurements, when some design is intended against the pious and simple-minded, they are told that if they will only eat of the forbidden fruit they shall be "*as gods*." We should like to know whether, in any known instances, a separation from the Wesleyan Societies by those who had derived their good amongst them, has led to increased enjoyment, elevated piety, purity of heart, and usefulness of life? We know of many instances of a contrary character; none of the nature supposed. Those who are now in a state of spiritual health have proof, in that circumstance, that the home they inhabit, the atmosphere they breathe, the food they eat, and the fountain at which they quench their thirst, are all conducive to that end; and the maxim of the honourable and honest part of the profession, "*to let well alone*," is a piece of advice which we are sure the intelligent portions of our people will apply to themselves, and leave the *quacks* to dispose of their nostrums in other quarters as they can.

THE RULES OF 1798 AND 1800, WITH OTHER RULES, AND THE WAY IN WHICH THE ASSOCIATION KEEP THEM.

A reprint of the pamphlet published by the Book-room in 1798, and about which the agitators have made such a stir, has recently made its appearance. The avowed reason for this is, that the pamphlet contains the following words: "Neither can any Member of the Society be excluded but by a majority at a Leaders' meeting." This sentence, it is maintained, compared with the Minutes of 1835, proves that Methodism has been changed. All the attempts to connect this publication with the Conference have utterly failed. It has now become a part of the Apocrypha of Methodism.

But, even allowing the book to possess all the authority for which its advocates contend, still it fails to establish the point for which it has been adduced. Two things are perfectly obvious:—

- 1.—The author, whoever he might be, was not a very careful and correct scribe. Some of his expressions are singularly loose and inaccurate. Page 4—"a Steward of the Society" means both a *Society* and a *Circuit* Steward. "Neither can any Member be excluded but by a majority." The Minutes of the preceding year had truly stated—"the far greater number exclude themselves by utterly forsaking us," and are quietly dropped without any "majority" at all. Again, page 8—"to prevent imposters from defrauding our brethren, the "real Members," "when obliged to remove into other parts," are "enjoined to receive a note of recommendation from a Travelling Preacher before their removal." Then follows a note of reference to Prov. 3—6, "In all thy ways acknowledge him," which, if strictly construed, would mean, acknowledge the Travelling Preacher. This, we suppose, would accord neither with the feelings of the agitators, nor with the intentions of the writer.

- 2.—All the difference between the Minutes of 1835 and the present pamphlet is the one states the whole truth respecting expulsions, and the other only a part. The Minutes teach that expulsion is an effect, produced by the concurrence of several different causes, some of which are specified. There is—1, Violation of rule—2, An

accusation preferred—3, A trial demanded—4, A decision on the case, by the vote of a "majority" of Leaders—5, The sentence pronounced by the Preacher. This off-hand sort of writer, wishful to say what he deemed most important about Methodism, within the compass of a penny pamphlet, refers to only one of these causes. Desirous, it would seem, to quiet the minds of some weak people, needlessly disturbed about the possibility of their own expulsion, by the agitators of the day, he just says, "Neither can any Member of the Society be excluded, but by a majority at a Leaders' Meeting." "There," says Mr. Eckett, "by a 'majority of Leaders,' and, *therefore*, the Preacher has nothing at all to do with the matter." Yet no plant can be matured, but by the rain of heaven. Does this exclude the influence of the sun? No man can be hanged in this country but by the verdict of a jury. Will it be said, that, *therefore*, the judges are mere cyphers in the affair? No man is justified, but by faith. Will Mr. Eckett say, *therefore*, the Supreme Judge does nothing in this work, when the Bible says, "it is God that justifieth?"

Mr. Eckett has chosen the function of an agitator, and delivers very long lectures on the subject of "breaches of rule." The infringements of the Preachers on the rules of 1797, is a topic which he has almost hacknied to death. We shall take the liberty of presenting him with a few new cases. If, instead of always dwelling upon the Preachers and the rules of 1797, he will occasionally introduce the people and his own rules of 1798, it will be a great relief both to himself and his hearers. In page 4 of this very book, it is said to be the business of a Leader "to inform the Preacher of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reprov'd." We know that he has met large knots of these disorderly people in Manchester, London, and elsewhere; but did he ever inform the Preacher of any one of them? Nay, he would not admit his own disorderly conduct when charged with it; but attempted to quibble, and to save himself at the expense of his friend, saying that the positive testimony of John Stephens was no evidence of the truth of what he said. There is also a rule which forbids "the using many words in buying and selling," or in making compacts. We have not arithmetic enough to say how many words he has used, for years past, in seeking to make a new compact with the Conference. The Queen-street people say they have heard his speeches so often that they have almost got them by heart. We shall not soon forget the feeling with which a gentleman from that Circuit hailed the regulations of the last Conference, and for this special reason, that they brought some hope of deliverance to himself and friends, who were almost dogged to death by Eckett's oratory. Another of these rules forbids "uncharitable or unprofitable conversation," and "evil speaking, particularly of magistrates and ministers." All who have heard the three hours' speeches know how little the speaker cared for such a rule as this. There is also a rule against "dancing, cards, plays, balls, or horse races." We are not sure that Thurston and his billiard-tables are in perfect accordance with this law, whether he was the author of the diabolical "Appeal to the British Public," or not. These rules are also against "brother going to law with brother." Mr. Eckett cannot have forgotten Dr. Warren and his "unsuccessful appeal," nor the conduct of his own Mr. Barford who dragged a younger brother before the mayor, without any sufficient cause. There is also the rule against "buying or selling spiritous liquors," to be applied to the chairman of the Liverpool Association, and to the Dudley wine and spirit merchant," whose establishment for despatching "his majesty's subjects," is said to be so very respectable. Finally, the book says, that "a Steward of the Society ought to be a man of upright conversation," and, we submit, that the Steward was not of upright conversation, who retained upwards of £18 and a Society's book; and, after keeping the money several weeks, returned it, through a fear of consequences; but still keeps the book, in the hope that so petty a theft will not be made the subject of a law suit. So that, if Mr. Eckett will follow the profession of lecturer on "breaches of rule," there is no necessity for him to be for ever harping upon one string. We can enable him to diversify his topics, and entertain his hearers with vast variety.

There is another case or two, which, although not written in the book of 1798, are entitled to a place in the *Illuminator*. Such, for instance, as that of the young sparks who carried off a library in Liverpool. This library contained a considerable number of books, which had been accumulating for years, and its fundamental law was, that it should *always* remain connected with the Methodist Leeds-street Sunday School. The teachers were the principal proprietors. This was their own law. When

a division in the Society became inevitable, the disposal of this library became a subject of consideration, and this rule was pleaded as a reason why it ought to remain on the premises, connected with the school, still to be continued there, the right of every individual in the property, of course, being strictly respected. A young Associationist, named Wood, said, in reply, that "the power which made the law could repeal it." No sooner said than done. The law was repealed in a few seconds. The teachers' meeting became a mob. A general scramble took place, and the books were all carried off on the Sunday evening. This law was supposed to partake of the nature of a promise. It was thought that the shareholders had, for various reasons best known to themselves, entered into an engagement—with each other—the Trustees of the premises—the Society—and the public generally, to the effect, that, the books should always remain on the same premises, and connected with the school; while one existed. "Very well," says moral philosopher Wood, but "the power which made the law can repeal it;"—which means, we suppose, that when a man has made a promise, he can repeal it whenever he finds it convenient to do so. We shall not controvert this position at present. It is useless to argue with robbers, when they happen to be the "majority." We may say, however, that the Almighty himself does not possess this power. "He abideth faithful." "He cannot deny himself." "He cannot lie." As far as we know, this power was never formally claimed, except by the spirit who "abode not in the truth," the pope, and the Liverpool limb of the "Grand Central." The majority of the teachers say the law has been repealed. The minority, who remain in peaceable connexion with our Society, say it has been broken, and that they have been robbed of their property. The thing is not worth a Chancery suit, and perhaps these injured people have no other means of redress; but Mr. Eckett and his friends have undertaken to defend the oppressed, and to bring the breakers of rule before the bar of public opinion.

Then there are the Rochdale Trustees. All the world knows how little they cared for rules, whether of 1797 or 1798, when they determined to bring in the Grand Central, in flat opposition to the provisions of the Deed, which themselves had signed, in the presence of witnesses, and nothing could restrain their madness short of a Chancery injunction.

There is also the recent exploit at Whitehaven. This also is a Sunday school case, and shows that villany is progressive; as, in some respects, it is an advance upon that at Liverpool. The rules of the Sunday school there say, "This Institution shall be managed by a committee of twenty, consisting of the Itinerant Preachers, Treasurer, and other persons.—The committee shall meet for the despatch of business, in the chapel, once a quarter, or oftener if necessary.—Five shall be competent to act, and *every thing* shall be determined by a majority." So much for the rule. Mark what follows. "The thing which has been done was not done by a committee, or any meeting of the committee; for *there has been no meeting of the committee.*" Our correspondent adds, under date, Nov. 18, 1835, "On Friday evening last, the men of the Grand Central Association in this town, who have fitted up a place of their own for worship, and other purposes, came to our chapel in a body; and, while some of them were pretending to do some business in the vestry, in order to amuse a few of our friends who staid in the vestry after the prayer-meeting,—others of them putting out the lights in the chapel, began to carry away the Sunday school books, and were detected by one of our friends in the commencement of their work. He met a ring-leader of them, with a box of books, in the doorway of the chapel; and, perceiving what he was doing, raised a cry of 'thieves—they are stealing the school books,' and attempted to prevent him from carrying the box away. But this served only as a signal for the rest of the party. Our friends endeavoured to put some obstructions in their way; but there being perhaps ten centrals to one of us, our efforts only exposed us to their fury and rage, and I would not have given two-pence for any man's life, who might have persisted to resist them. They plundered the chapel of the books, took away the boxes, a chest for clothes to lend to poor children on the Sunday, in order that they might come to the school, desks, writing desks, the library, and left nothing at all which they could find belonging to our school, except leaves, and pieces of old spelling-books, which were to be seen, like withered leaves in autumn, on the morning after this enterprize took place. They were more than an hour in the chapel in all, and some of them, before they departed, * * * * * which I choose not to name."

It is said that misery makes strange bed-fellows; and indeed how else could such a genteel young man as Mr. Wood, and the "*amiable* Dr. Warren," ever come to be associated with such brutalities as these. We suppose it will be said that some of the men had been "illegally expelled," and, therefore, all the rest was right. Be this as it may, they have clearly broken their own rules, for this exploit of mingled robbery and nastiness,

was not done by the vote of "a majority" of the committee, nor was it ever submitted to their consideration at all. Our correspondent, asks rather feelingly, "what shall we do?" We doubt not but that good counsel will be forthcoming in due time. In the meanwhile, we advise the friends at Whitehaven to humble themselves for not having "purged out" this vile leaven long ago, to be thankful that the antinomians are gone at last, *on any terms*, and then calmly to hope for better days; for, beside having the sympathy of the wise and good, even orator Eckett must now either speak a word in their favour, or stand convicted before the world as a member of that ancient sect, who are said to "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

ANOTHER DOCTOR OF THE GRAND CENTRAL! OR, A MAN "SINGULARLY FITTED FOR A GREAT ACTION."

Wonders will never cease. It was only the other day that our infatuated contemporary published an account of the defection, from the Old or Conference Connexion, of the Society at Helsby, in the Chester Circuit, and that the chapel, the property of a person of the name of Burgess, had been closed against the Travelling and Local Preachers. We now have heard of a glorious Missionary Meeting in that village, the barn in which it was held crowded to excess, and the collection considerably more than was ever obtained on a similar occasion in the place of worship formerly occupied by our Preachers.

What tended to increase the popularity of this Meeting was the novelty of holding it in a barn, and the threats held out by a certain *baby* of Esculapius, that he would attend and break up the Meeting. We spare the name of the person of the pestle, out of respect to his family connexions, but to assist conjecture, it is very similar to *bully* or *gully*! Can you guess, gentle reader? The persons who assembled to take an active part in the proceedings of the Meeting, were Mr. Thomas Bowers who presided, "the redoubtable Mr. Stamp," (we thank the Association for teaching us that word), and Mr. Straw. Prior to the opening of the Meeting, this gentleman of the faculty was seen to enter a public house, from whence he came, no doubt fully charged, to the barn; and, mounting the platform, took possession of a conspicuous place. Several persons noticed a considerable number of the workmen employed in the neighbouring quarries occupying exclusively a particular part of the premises; and, on a little enquiry it was found that they were there at the beck of the Doctor (!) under the promise of being remunerated for the loss of time their presence there would occasion; and, also, of receiving a quantity of the publican's *best*, when the work at the barn should be finished. After Mr. Straw had concluded his address, the Doctor rose and demanded a hearing. The chairman very properly wished to know on what subject he wished to occupy the attention of the meeting, and he replied, on that of Methodist missions. Mr. Stamp stated that on that topic he for one had no objection that he should be heard, and pledged himself to reply as soon as he had finished, and therefore requested of the chairman a hearing for this *Doctor*; stating, however, that as soon as he departed from that subject, he for one would call him to order. The Doctor immediately commenced by styling himself the great defender of the civil and religious rights of the poor, and commenced a coarse attack on the conduct and character of certain persons in the Connexion in terms the most unguarded and abusive, and what our *small* friend, James Russell, of Ruabon, would call *libellious*! He was, of course, called to order; this made the poor Doctor almost frantic; he said he had a *guard* in the barn, who would rise in his defence, and insist upon his being heard. On his guard he called; but, alas, they were silent as the grave, and as motionless as the walls of the barn in which they were assembled! His rage became ungovernable—he stamped—he swore; but all the effects he produced were alarming the ladies, and compelling gentlemen present to adopt means to eject him from the barn. To the latter step, they had the authority of the owner of the premises. A stout man on the platform and a local preacher, was de-

sired to remove him from the platform, who gently took hold of the collar of his coat; and in whose hands the *Doctor*, appeared as a moth between the finger and thumb. No sooner did this Esculapian find himself within the grasp of one of his betters, than he sprang like a cat over the barricade of the platform among his men below, expecting they would immediately rise in his defence. Still they were motionless! He addressed them again, when a *lady* went up to him and informed him that, unless he behaved himself as a gentleman, he should, *sans ceremonie*, be turned out. This settled the *Doctor*, and acted upon him in a far more *composing* manner than any sedative pill or draught he ever administered to a patient. The Meeting then proceeded, and, after an excellent collection, concluded in peace. With such partizans, the "Grand Central" is utterly harmless as to any mischief the Wesleyan Connexion shall experience from its malignant but feeble operations. Had this *Doctor* shown off in Whitehaven we should not have been surprised; but we little thought the "Grand Central" was so supported in the neighbourhood of Frodsham. A few more facts of this kind, and the Association is no more.

THE RULES OF 1798 AND 1800.

(From the Magazine, for December.)

"In harmony with this interpretation, is that version of the Rules of the Society which was published in 1798. It would have been unnecessary to refer to this production, at all, had it not become the 'forlorn hope' of certain agitators of the present day. A strange attempt has been made to show that this version of the Rules of the Society was published by the Conference for the purpose of amending its alleged imperfect legislation of the preceding year. The ground on which it has been endeavoured thus to impose upon the Methodist public will be seen in the following extract from the report of a speech, said to be made by Mr. Eckett, on the 2d of September:—'He held in his hand the Rules as published by order of the Conference of 1798. That very copy was given by Mr. James Wood, the father of the Conference, to an individual in Sheffield, who had lent it to him (Mr. Eckett) on that individual's being received in Society by Mr. Wood; and here it was expressly declared, that no member could, on any account, be expelled, without the consent of a majority of the Leaders' Meeting. By the way, he could explain the origin of the publication of 1797, and the reason of the difference between it and the Minutes of the Conference of 1798. These Minutes, on the article of expulsion, did not give satisfaction; and to one who was dissatisfied, and complained to Mr. James Wood, that gentleman replied, in effect, 'Only be quiet; those Minutes were hastily drawn up; the Conference of 1798 will do every thing for your satisfaction.' The publication which he held in his hand, dated 1798, was the fulfilment of the promise. A second edition of this authorized and original version of the laws was printed in 1800.

"On this report being made public, a friend of the venerable Minister alluded to, anxious to afford him an opportunity of explicitly denying what was thus ascribed to him, wrote to him upon the subject. His answer was such as might be expected:—'I have no recollection whatever of such a conversation, as asserted by Mr. Eckett; but am fully persuaded there are not two grains of truth in it. It has nothing of my likeness in it: I have not been accustomed to speak lightly of any act of the Conference.' To all who know Mr. Wood, this alone would appear sufficiently conclusive; but it is not all. In another part of the letter, he further observes: 'On the law of the Conference, in 1797, respecting the expulsion of members, I do affirm I never had but one opinion; namely, that the *fact* was with the Leaders' Meeting, but the *sentence* was with the Superintendent.' This declaration settles the question; and will effectually preserve the character of that eminent servant of Christ from the imputation which it has been attempted to fasten upon it. Memory may fail in the lapse of years, and passing events may be partially or wholly forgotten; but it is impossible that the settled, permanent opinions of a man's own mind, which have been blended with all his thinkings and his motives for action, on a given subject, throughout a long life, should be obliterated.

"The fine theory of Mr. Eckett respecting the design of this version of the Rules having thus been exploded, his assertion that it was 'authorised,' 'published by order of the Conference,' may be noticed. This also is met by a flat denial. The edition in question was not published by the order of Conference. All the books of which the Book-Steward is the publisher may be said to be under the general sanction of the Conference, inasmuch as he is the agent of the Conference for managing the concerns of the book-room; but none can be regarded as *official* publications, in the strict sense of the expression, except such books as have been published by the explicit order of the Conference. At every annual meeting, the Conference gives express directions respecting the publication of its acts; and no statements of the proceedings of the Conference can claim the character of official documents, except such publications as are faithful copies of the Minutes of the Conference taken at the time, and signed by the President and Secretary, or such collections of Rules as have been prepared by the direction, and published in pursuance of the express order, of the Conference itself. Mr. Eckett's version is not, therefore, an official publication; for it is not, as a whole, a faithful transcript of the Rules and Minutes of the Conference, nor did the Conference order its publication. Mr. Wood, in the letter already quoted, expresses his belief that the edition was prepared by a private individual, 'without any order from the Conference;' and in this he was undoubtedly correct. It was got up by one who appeared to be of opinion that, in the new state of things, introduced by the regulations of the preceding Conference, a general view of those regulations, incorporated with the standing Rules of the Society, and with the Band Rules, would be useful to the Members. It does not, however, appear to have had an extensive circulation, as only two editions were called for in the course of several years. Mr. Eckett would represent this version of the Rules as embodying the whole law of Methodism: he calls it the 'authorized and original version of the laws.' Has he considered the subject well? Does he seriously intend to take, as the code of Methodistical law, a publication in which is not found the Plan of Pacification? Will Dr. Warren thank him for thus throwing overboard what he himself has regarded as the *Magna Charta* of Metho-

dism? Mr Eckett's eagerness to have his favourite version of the Rules regarded as the 'authorized and original version of the laws,' is certainly one of the most remarkable instances of infatuation, and blind determination to gain a favourite point at all hazards, which the late agitation has afforded. To return to the history of this version: It was at length superseded by a compilation really 'published by order of the Conference,' and, consequently, official. The Conference of 1797 not only published a large collection of Minutes, under the title of 'The Form of Discipline' &c. well known in the Court of Chancery as the Exhibit F.; but it moreover determined, that a smaller collection of Minutes relating to the local officers and meetings should be published at some future opportunity. Circumstances delayed the execution of this plan till the year 1803. On the appointment of Mr. Benson to the editorship of the *Magazine*, by the Conference of that year, he was requested to prepare the promised collection of Rules. This he did; and the collection, which was published in the following year, 1804, is thus prefaced:—

"The following resolution was entered in the Minutes of the Conference in 1797:—'We have determined that all the Rules which relate to the Societies, Leaders, Stewards, Local Preachers, Trustees, and Quarterly Meetings, shall be published with the Rules of the Society, for the benefit and convenience of all the members.'

"A new edition of the Rules being called for, *in executing the above determination*, the following Rules, being the most material, are here subjoined."

"This introduction, it will be perceived, stamps the collection as an *official* publication of the Rules ordered by the Conference in 1797. The difference between the two publications is very marked. In Mr. Eckett's version, the compiler sometimes copies the rule of the Conference, and in other instances gives what he *conceives* to be the meaning of the rule in his own words; so as to make a kind of paraphrase of the standing Rules, and some of the regulations of 1797, with the Band Rules appended: but the *official* publication is such a collection of the Rules of the Society, and Minutes of the Conference, regularly arranged under their respective heads, as was especially calculated to answer the end for which it was designed—'the benefit and convenience of all the members.' On its appearance, Mr. Eckett's version was silently dropped. The Societies wanted *the Rules themselves*, arranged and harmonized by authority, not any unofficial version or *paraphrase*: successive editions of this collection were called for; and at length, when class-papers were superseded by class-books, the Conference directed that this collection should thenceforth be bound up with the class-books, in order that the Leaders might have it at hand for constant reference. The collection contained in the class-books now in use, is a reprint of the original edition of 1804.

"Only one more topic on the subject of the version of 1798 remains for brief consideration. The inquirer would naturally conclude that the language used in this version, in reference to the expulsion of members, must be very explicit and decided, because otherwise such strenuous efforts would not have been made to prove the *official* character of the publication; and surprised indeed must every intelligent person be, when he is informed that the only reference to the subject is contained in the following passage: 'Neither can any member of the Society be excluded but by a majority at a Leaders' Meeting.' The most superficial acquaintance with law is sufficient to suggest to a person that this may possibly be true, as far as it goes, and yet Mr. Eckett be very wrong in his interpretation. Magna Charta, the palladium of English liberty, contains identically the same language, in regard of the great privilege of Englishmen to be tried by a Jury of their countrymen. It is there stated, that no free man shall have imposed upon him the penalty of the law for any offence, 'except by the oath (*nisi per sacramentum*) of good and lawful men.' But what would be thought of the person who would gravely maintain, on the strength of this insulated passage, that, according to English law, the Jury ought to fix the *sentence*, as well as find the *verdict*? Every school-boy who knows any thing at all about the matter, understands that, when it is declared in Magna Charta, that a man cannot be subjected to legal punishment 'but by the oath' of a Jury, nothing more is meant than that the Jury must deliver a verdict of guilty, before the Judge can award the penalty of the law, and any mere smatterer in Methodical law, not blinded by prejudice, on reading that, 'Neither can any member of the Society be excluded but by a majority at a Leaders' Meeting,' would interpret the passage by the plain and obvious standard Rule of 1797, (to which Rule *itself* he would in fairness refer for full authoritative information on the point), and understand it as saying, that the Leaders' Meeting must find an accused member guilty, before the Superintendent can inflict the penalty of expulsion from the Society. The passage merely states the fact, that a majority of the Leaders' Meeting is necessary to the expulsion of an accused member; but it does not show how or in what manner this majority contributes to his expulsion, any more than the quotation from Magna Charta shows how or in what manner the oath of a Jury contributes to the legal punishment of the offender. To ascertain this, in both cases, reference must be made elsewhere. Had then this version been properly and strictly an *official* publication, and were the passage in question the very language of the Conference itself in 1798, what would it avail in the controversy? The present advocates of the existing constitution of Methodism, at the present day, say precisely the same thing. They also maintain, that 'neither can any member of the Society be excluded but by a majority at a Leaders' Meeting.' The question at issue relates merely to the manner in which this majority contributes to expulsion; which, as has been shown, is not to be learned from the quotation alone, any more than it could be ascertained from the passage in Magna Charta, considered by itself, how the oath of a Jury inflicts legal punishment upon a criminal. The practical agreement between this version of the Rules and the standard Rules themselves, as contained in the Minutes of the Conference for 1797, and re-published, *that very year*, in the "Form of discipline," sufficiently accounts for the fact of its being published, and sold for some time, at the Book-room. The Conference saw no reason to prohibit the temporary circulation of a pamphlet which was substantially good for general purposes; especially as its own resolution, respecting an official and standard collection of the Rules for the Society and its various Officers had not then been carried into effect. No one in these days appears to have suspected any discrepancy between this publication and the authorized Minutes of the Conference; and it was reserved for Mr. Eckett to make the notable discovery that *one line and a half* in it possess such a fulness of meaning as entirely to abrogate the standard Minutes of the Conference, and substitute this version in their place, as the '*authorized and original version of the laws*!' The truth probably was, that, till the appointment of Mr. Benson to the office of Conference Editor, no person of competent knowledge and character was found who possessed sufficient leisure to undertake the task of executing the direction of 1797, respecting the preparation of an official collection of the disciplinary Regulations which were to be added to the original Rules of the Society. For *ordinary* purposes, it was necessary, in the mean time, that some edition should be kept on sale; the edition then actually current was substantially and practically sufficient for this provisional service; and it was allowed to be re-printed, *until* another and more exact one could be prepared, which was, as has been stated, accomplished in 1804 by Mr. Benson. In the mean time, no serious mistake could be anticipated. The authenticated 'Form of

Discipline, published in 1797, at the very period when the concessions of that year were fresh in the recollection of friends and opponents, had fully embodied, and exactly recited, the laws then made, of which the other collection, when completed, was only intended as a cheap and small *abridgment*, for popular use; and to that 'Form,' and especially to the *Minutes for 1797 themselves*, every honest inquirer would naturally refer, if any dispute should arise, or any ambiguity of phrase should require an accurate and decisive interpretation. At all events these things are *certain* :—1. Whatever was the history of the edition on which Mr. Eckett and his party rely, and whatever its merits and defects the *actual* law about expulsions can be only authoritatively found in the really *original* 'Minutes' of 1797, and in the 'Form of Discipline' of the same year. And 2. The wicked and wanton imputations of fraudulent and dishonest manoeuvre, so shamelessly lavished by the modern revolutionary orators and pamphleteers, in reference to this point, are disgraceful only to their ignorant or malignant authors. The *pretended* discrepancy applies only to the period between 1797 and 1804. Now, the venerable Preachers of that day, most of whom have long since gone to their reward, even if occasionally defective, and even slovenly, as to the compilation and printing of their public documents, were far above all suspicion, as to the integrity of their motives or designs. They were '*the old Preachers*,' whom even the agitators can occasionally laud, when it suits their purpose.

"The opinion of the Rev. James Wood, already quoted, in support of that interpretation of the rule relating to expulsion, which has been confirmed by the late Conference, is deserving of especial consideration. That venerable Minister is in every sense worthy of the appellation of "father of the Conference," and equally does he enjoy the affection and esteem of the Societies. While steadily maintaining principle, his proceedings have ever been so remarkably characterized by a spirit of mildness and conciliation, as to procure for him universal esteem. His opportunities too for acquainting himself with the subject on which he speaks have been most ample. He took a part in all the proceedings of the Conference in 1797. His name stands early in the list of Preachers who, at that Conference, signed the following memorable declaration :—

"Whereas, we, the undersigned, have, on this and the preceding day, carefully revised the Rules drawn up and left us by our venerable father in the gospel, the Rev. Mr. Wesley, which were published by him in our large Minutes, to which we consented when we were admitted, and by which we were regulated during his life : and whereas we have collected together those Rules which we believe to be essential to the existence of Methodism, as well as others to which we have no objection, we do now VOLUNTARILY and in GOOD FAITH, sign our names as approving of, and engaging to comply with, the aforesaid Collection of Rules, or Code of Laws, God being our helper."

"He was also privy to all the negotiations which took place between the Conference and the lay friends, who assembled in Leeds at the same time, as well as the Kilham delegates; and must, therefore, certainly know what the Conference refused to give up, and what it did actually concede. To hear such a man, who could not be mistaken, and whose inviolable integrity places him beyond the reach of suspicion, say, 'On the law of the Conference of 1797, respecting the expulsion of Members, I do affirm I never had but one opinion, viz., that the *fact* was with the Leaders' Meeting, but the *sentence* was with the Superintendent;—to hear such a man make such a declaration, in corroboration of that accumulation of evidence which supports the late Conference in its decision, is sufficient to set the question fully and for ever at rest.

"Against the evidence which has been thus adduced, nothing can even plausibly be opposed, except certain alleged instances of some Preachers having acted otherwise in the expulsion of Members. But, on examination, those instances fail to support the cause in behalf of which they are adduced. The case of a respectable Preacher, which occurred some years ago at Liverpool, has been most unfairly quoted. The Deputation sent from the Conference did not reverse the sentence of the Superintendent because he had taken upon himself to fix the sentence without the vote of a Leaders' Meeting, but for the reason that he had expelled the person *without any trial at all*; thus violating the rule of 1797, in its unquestionable and admitted interpretation. Other instances have been referred to, of Preachers who are said to have consulted the Leaders before the offenders were expelled; but, will it be affirmed that, after having taken one vote as to the guilt of the accused persons, they then proceeded to fix the sentence also by another vote? Unless it can be shown that the expulsion was also determined by a vote, what do such instances prove? The judge in a court of law will frequently regulate the sentence he pronounces, with special reference to the recommendations of the jury; but is that to be produced as proof that the sentence is therefore fixed by the jury? It has probably occurred that in some instances the Superintendent, anxious to take the Leaders with him in all his proceedings, has conversed with them as to the punishment which it was best to inflict; but it is a very ungracious return for such extra-official liberality, to make it the ground of an attack upon the established Rules and order of the Society."

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We thank "Philos" for the favour of his pamphlet. Communications have been received from "A Wesleyan Methodist,"—"B."—"London Correspondent,"—"Delta,"—"Gamma,"—"Observer;" and from Sunderland, Frodsham, Prescott, and St. Helens.

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THE ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION ;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES ; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY ; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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THE PROSPECTS OF METHODISM.—No. 3. DOCTRINES.

THE utility of doctrinal standards has generally been recognised in the practice of Christian churches. When the Reformers renounced the authority of the Church of Rome, they did not leave either themselves or those who associated with them in the same ministry, in a state of wild and lawless freedom on this point ; but, by united counsel, consultation, study of the Scriptures, and prayer to God for direction, agreed to certain standards of doctrine, to which they mutually bound themselves, and determined to require the assent of all who united with them. In imitation of the general practice, when Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors began their cause, one of the first things they did was to settle "*what they should teach.*" Hence his Notes and Sermons, which were made the basis of the Wesleyan faith, embody and exhibit the views he acquired by this diligent, simple, and prayerful search after the truth.

The doctrines established as the rule of teaching to the ministry, and generally, as the symbols of faith to a community, must be acknowledged as of primary importance. As the founder of Methodism claimed the right of an independent judgment, so great originality marks his doctrinal sentiments, and also his manner of stating them. Having renounced the harsh dogmas of Calvinism altogether, and at the same time, repudiated the cold, and often erroneous, opinions of the old English Arminian school, he was obliged to seek immediate guidance from heaven, and, according to his views of the "*analogy of faith,*" be the study of the Scriptures alone, propound it to his growing Societies. No mind had exactly trodden the path he sought. Time, numbers, learning, and the authority long exercised in most of the reformed churches, had given great influence and *moral* force to the Calvinistic system. Its peculiarities were then, as in many quarters is the case now, considered the life of the evangelical system, and that it was impossible to hold the saving verities of Christianity except in connexion with that creed. A revulsion had been produced in this country; the opinions of the disci-

ples and followers of Arminius, who had refined on the doctrines of that great man, rather than his own, had been adopted; under the auspices of Laud and others, of the high church party, a course of teaching little better than Pelagianism had long been prevalent; and the consequence was, that, between the two extremes, truth lay stretched on the tortuous rack of controversy, till her lovely features were distorted to deformity, and experimental and practical piety became nearly extinct. Mr. Wesley could embrace neither of these systems. He perceived, from his diligent and constant study of the word of God, that they both rested on fallacious views of the truth. From his study of the mystic and *legal* divines, he was in danger of having his mind warped either into an agreement with the one or the other; but, by the mercy of God, having attained the knowledge of the doctrine of justification by faith only, and experienced this blessing himself, he escaped the dangers which surrounded him, and obtained the true key to the entire scheme of the evangelical dispensation.

All experience shows how intimately the knowledge of this great doctrine stands associated with a right apprehension of the pure "gospel of God our Saviour." Those who stumble at this point—and it is the point at which all stumble who do not "submit themselves to the righteousness of God"—remain, however zealous and excellent in other respects, perfectly ignorant of the new covenant. They may amuse themselves and others with learned criticisms, antiquities, and history, as well as doctrinal speculations; but not having found the *entrance* to the kingdom of God, they continue in the outer court. It is important to remark, in Mr. Wesley's case, how much depended on this one event. In his own personal state he had been free from blame—cultivated a high tone of moral virtue—felt the most ardent desire to attain to Christian holiness—laboured most assiduously, by visits to the poor and sick, as well as by frequent preaching—denied himself of all gaiety and superfluity of living, devoting all the surplus, after a most frugal provision for himself, to charitable purposes—and, finally, expatriated himself, and took his place in the wilds of Georgia, in the character of a Missionary. But the whole yielded him no peace; and he still lay under the tyranny of guilt and sin. From the few remains of his writings belonging to this period, it is evident, that although he took the utmost pains and manifested the greatest sincerity and zeal to produce useful impressions and lead men to the service of God, yet none were found amongst his auditors urging the important inquiry—"What shall I do to be saved?" But he had no sooner attained to the enjoyment of this grace, than light broke out on every thing around him. He had, previously to this period, held high, and on the whole, scriptural, opinions respecting Christian purity and holiness; but being detached, in his manner of stating the subject, from the atonement of Christ, the influence of the Holy Spirit, and justification by faith, he found that his theory was without a foundation, and all his exertions only led to painful disappointment. When he attained right views on this question, then his fabric had a basis on which to rest, and he proceeded to erect it in its finest proportions. It may have been an advantage to his system of theology, that Mr. Wesley was taught the vital doctrine of justification last. He had well studied the nature, amount, and obligations of the moral parts of religion, and reared for himself a most beautiful structure of ethical religion. His system was like the creative act of God, by which he made man out of the dust of the earth:

perfect in all the parts of his body, but still destitute of mind. By a second act He "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," and then he "became a *living soul*." In like manner, this great man built a fine and glorious system of holiness, and when he attained the knowledge of justification, the whole became instinct with life. If the reverse had been the case, and he had acquired faith first, he might have been so entirely absorbed by the pre-eminent and supreme importance of this one part of the great Christian scheme, that in his zeal to make it known he might not have followed out from that germ and centre of all saving truth, the other branches of the subject so fully as he has now done. It is often observed that men who "have believed to the saving of their souls," and attained a clear apprehension of the manner of a sinner's justification, are extremely defective in their notions of Christian holiness and practical duties. For the reasons already stated, this is not the case with the Wesleyan doctrines. By a beautiful and well-sustained induction of truths, this system places the Saviour on the throne, and attributes to him all the merit and grace of salvation; but at the same time—by the force of truth, the influence of the Holy Spirit, the practical effects of the life of faith, and obedience to the divine word—it aims at surrounding that throne, not with a host of Antinomian admirers of *distinguishing grace*, but of sanctified, devout, and adoring subjects, waiting, with eager willingness and activity, to obey his laws, as well as to receive the fullness of his redeeming love. The salvation taught in this theology is not an investiture in a righteousness imputed—the "garments of salvation" put on—the liberty and immunities of the gospel made over in covenant grant—the claim to personal distinctions founded on the counsels and decrees of God; whilst the heart, the spirit, the character remain in all the corruption and misery of the fall. Laying the foundation of salvation in the free grace of God in Christ, made over to man on the intelligible and practicable condition of faith, it insists on the necessity of being saved from sin;—that the grace of God is in power as well as in privilege; and, in truth, that the highest happiness consists in being "delivered out of the hands of our enemies, and walking before God in righteousness and holiness."

Another of the distinguishing features of the Wesleyan theology is its unity. The Trinity, the atonement, the influence of the Holy Spirit, the grace of God freely exercised in the salvation of man, faith as the condition of justification, the possible attainment of assurance and the witness of the Spirit, the entire sanctification of the soul and the enjoyment of perfect love, together with the obligation to cultivate the habit of obedience to the precepts of the Saviour's law, are the leading doctrines in this system, as, in some of their modifications, they must be in all others claiming to be evangelical. But the point on which we intend to remark, is the harmony in which these doctrines are found. It is true, Mr. Wesley never wrote a system of divinity, or placed his doctrinal opinions in consecutive order; but if his scattered sermons and treatises on the most vital subjects of religion are placed in order by the reader, it will be found, that without introducing philosophical arrangements, in point of fact, his sentiments appear in perfect unity in themselves, and beautiful concord with each other.

It is well-known that this great man taught the doctrine of universal atonement. So do many modern Calvinists. But the one holds it in perfect consistency, whilst the other embarrasses the subject with decrees,

personal election, and an arbitrary limitation of its benefits on the narrow scale of the Calvinistic scheme of predestination. It is extremely difficult to imagine on what principle an infinite and universal atonement can be provided by the wisdom and love of the Deity, and then the same Almighty Being, of His own will and by an unalterable decree, to narrow the benefit to a small and limited number of individuals. This has all the appearance of contradiction and opposition, flowing from the same infinite mind; which we know is utterly impossible. As the Scriptures unequivocally declare the universality of the redemption price—which is, no doubt, a universal provision for the salvation of all men—so, on the same principle of universality, we are to construe the calls and promises of the gospel message, and understand them to be literally addressed to all mankind. Of what imaginable benefit could a universal atonement be, dissevered from universal mercy, universal invitations and promises, universal spiritual influence, and a possible universal repentance, faith, pardon, and salvation? To fasten the doctrine of a universal atonement to a limited and partial scheme of election and predestination, is to bring two contrary propositions together, and father them on infinite intelligence; as much as if it were affirmed, that the laws of a country are universally equal, and then, that these laws secured singular advantages, immunities, and franchises to a part of the community, and left all the rest to shift for themselves. A Being whose nature and attributes are absolutely infinite, and consequently equal, can never decree, or arrange, two things which are in palpable contradiction to each other, and yet, at the same time, relate to the same end. The atonement of Christ, and the counsels, decrees, predestination, providence, revelations, calls of the gospel, and influences of grace, not only originate in the same divine mind, but relate to the same subjects—the salvation and happiness of man. If so, how can the one contradict the other? It is impossible for God to do one thing in the atonement, namely, make provision for the salvation of all men; and then, in his arrangements to carry this provision out, act on another principle, namely, to restrict it to a select and limited number. And as we are certain the Divine Being cannot originate clashing and contradictory propositions, so, because the holy Scriptures are inspired, we are equally certain that they cannot teach opposite sentiments, on the same subject, as truth. This is self-evident, whether we can discover the right interpretation of particular portions of the sacred volume or not.

The Wesleyan theology avoids this difficulty, and in connexion with a universal atonement, holds out peace and salvation to all mankind. This view has, no doubt, had much to do with the practical operations of Methodism; and we chiefly refer to it on this account. No restrictive and embarrassing limitations checked the flow of charity, or retarded the zeal of Mr. Wesley. He settled it as a first principle, that “by the grace of God, Jesus Christ tasted death for every man;” and consequently, as every man was included in the mercy and merit of the Saviour’s death, so every man was in a virtual, and might be brought into a state of positive and experimental grace and salvation. Animated and encouraged by this truth, he flew like the angel of Apocalyptic vision, with “the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.” No doubt as to the freeness and efficiency of the message he bore, or of the gracious will of God that the persons whose salvation he sought had the right to believe, hung like a drag on the movements of his own mind, or embarrassed the liberty and fervour of his style of address. His heart was free, in this respect, to follow the most glowing impulses of Christian charity, as well as to labour in certain hope of success. And a similar confidence existed as regards the people. They might be sunk into the lowest state of ignorance, barbarity, vice, and consequent guilt; but, in the glowing description of divine mercy from the lips of their philanthropic herald of salvation, they stood before him as redeemed men; and because redeemed, capable of conversion. They were taught, not merely that it was their duty to repent, but that adequate grace was provided and proffered in Christ, who was “exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel.” Jesus Christ being exhibited in the freeness of his grace, the infinitude of his merit, the perfection of his righteousness, and the universality of his atonement, and all being held forth as available to them, in the promises of the gospel, they were invited to exercise trust in the Saviour, and expect a present freedom from guilt and the enjoyment of peace with God.

The difference betwixt seeking the conversion of men, under the thorough persuasion, that because they are redeemed they are all within the pale of salvation; and the apprehension that, possibly, the message may be carried to tribes and families, who, having no decretal interest in it, are incapable of embracing it, is very great. This,

no doubt, has had much to do with the *extent* of the operations proposed to himself by Mr. Wesley, and prosecuted by his followers. To admit, as the leading principle of their creed, that the provisions of the gospel were universal, and then to limit their exertions to benefit mankind, would have presented a strange inconsistency. This is not chargeable on the founder of our community, or his descendants. They have, and are, attempting, in the midst of much obloquy and discouragement, to make the building commensurate with the foundation; and on the ground of a universal atonement to rear the fabric of universal salvation. The conception is noble, and the attempt worthy of the genius of the gospel. With other corruptions of the truth, the incessant propensity to limit it to nations and congregations, is not the least. It is evident that the Apostles and primitive teachers acted on the commission of our Lord, to "go and preach the gospel to every creature;" but in the lapse of time, this obligation was lost sight of, and the object was to make religion national or congregational. Indeed, the notion of universality was retained in the Church of Rome; but then, it was merely the claim to universal authority and dominion, on the part of that haughty hierarchy, whilst the gospel itself, together with the souls of men, were totally neglected.—Amongst other benefactions to the church and to the world, we owe a debt of gratitude to John Wesley for restoring the gospel to its true position. In his hands, it was an instrument of universal good to the world. He saw in the covenant of grace, in the cross of Christ, in the promises and predictions of Scripture, and in the kingdom of Christ, as in a map, all the nations and families of mankind; and though destitute of worldly property, patronage, and support, depending exclusively on God, and the truth of His word, he began to operate on this glorious and expanded scale.—Few understood him then, as few understand his system now; but acting on his simple, but sublime principle, he steadily prosecuted his purpose, and, as might be expected, in his own life time, he beheld his doctrine proclaimed, and his plans of mercy established, in every part of the three kingdoms—the islands of the channel—the West Indian archipelago—and through the American Union. He gradually drew others into his views, raised them to his own elevation, presented them the noble perspective of a world of immortal men lying within the reach of gospel light and grace, and, finally, succeeded in making his own sentiments the basis of a system, and breathing his spirit into its institutions. The mere Church-of-England man could not follow these movements. They lay beyond the pale of the Establishment, and to him they appeared disorderly. It was saving souls, by extra parochial efforts, and withal, by an eccentric movement beyond the lines of Episcopal demarcation; and his calculations on the light and grace of the gospel, all lay within the limits of the national church. The Congregationalist could not understand him, because he did not wait for a call from the people, an election to office, and sit down to dole out a couple of cold and lifeless lectures to a Sunday congregation.

We question, whether, when this greatest of uninspired men began his career, and moved on in his course of rapid evangelization, any man of the times—except, perhaps, George Whitfield; and he was embarrassed by his creed—understood the spirit and nature of the vocation. Aided by the doctrine of universal redemption, he saw through the medium of the prophecies, as from the top of an elevated mountain, the world of mankind stretched before his eye, in countless numbers, groping in darkness, prostrate in ruin, and covered with guilt and sin. But he saw them not as others. He knew they were given to the Son—were redeemed by His blood—and were within the pale of salvation. He took his measures accordingly; fitted his system to the emergency; and leaving all party, local, sectarian, and even national prejudices behind him, he moved to the task of leading the world to God. How far his views, and what is more, his example, has led to the establishment of the numerous Missionary Societies of the day, it is not for us at present to trace out; but, there is no doubt, an intimate connexion which, if, at present, the church is in no temper to concede, will, at a future period, be awarded, amidst the wondering admirations of enlightened myriads of mankind.

The primary reason for the Poll Deed, legalizing the Conference, and regulating their proceedings in all future time, was to secure this doctrinal purity, in connexion with a regular appointment of Preachers to enunciate these saving truths to the congregations. The subject of church patronage, implying an overpowering influence in the appointment of Ministers to their cure, is, confessedly, a difficult question. The national church has not secured any thing like uniformity; and we apprehend, one of the most painful difficulties which good men meet with in their attempts to improve the spiritual state of the Establishment, arises from this cause. Many of the livings are in the hands of the government of the day; others are in the gift of corporate bodies; and the great majority are possessed by private families. The appointment of Ministers

being thus exposed to so many contingencies, arising out of the moral character, religious tastes and views, or secular and family interests of patrons, it is not possible that any security can exist for evangelical purity of doctrine. The appointment of converted and evangelical men is an accident, dependent on the views and opinions of men who, in numerous cases, care nothing on the subject. In consequence of this, it has generally happened, that when an evangelical Minister has been planted in a particular locality, and succeeded in awakening the surrounding population to serious godliness, after the toils of a few years, either in consequence of his removal or his death, he has been succeeded by those who have been of a different spirit, and his work has been left to perish, or to assume some form of dissent. The writer of this article recollects, in a conversation with the justly celebrated ROBERT HALL, that that gentleman stated as his opinion, that the successes of the evangelical clergy would ultimately tend to swell the ranks of dissent from this cause. The subject which led to this remark was the then recent circumstance of the appointment of a gentleman of anti-evangelical views to succeed the Rev. Leigh Richmond to the parish of Turvey; the congregation, it was stated, being dissatisfied, many of them had united with a small dissenting interest, and they had then been building a new chapel for their accommodation. Mr. Hall then remarked, that from the same cause, and because converted men could not sustain the spiritual life by attending a worldly ministry, they would be compelled to unite with dissenters, or raise *themselves* into a practically dissenting community, to secure the doctrines by which alone they could profit. No doubt, the opinion is well founded; and the true friends of experimental and practical religion, in the church, have mourned over this as one of the most stubborn evils to be contended with.

Among the Presbyterians, the nomination to the ministerial office, and consequently the supervision of doctrines, has usually rested with the trustees of chapels. It is well known, that in consequence of this and other kinds of secular influence, the chapels and endowments belonging to this body have nearly all fallen under the blighting domination of Socinianism. These places of worship, originally erected by orthodox non-conformists, were intended to supply their children and descendants with a wholesome doctrine; but in consequence of a defective settlement, they have gradually been changed into Unitarian temples, where men are statedly engaged to "deny the Lord who bought them"—the vicarious nature of his death—the existence and influence of the Holy Spirit—together with all those great truths which have been proved, in all ages, the only doctrines which are saving to guilty man. The only remedy for any portion of the flock belonging to these places, retaining a conscientious adherence to the faith of their fathers, has been in a separation. The history of this section of the church irrefragably proves the insecurity of Christian doctrine in the hands of a junto of privileged lay officers.

The Independent persuasion has placed the election of the pastor, and consequently the exercise of a final judgment of his doctrines, in the hands of the church. But even in this scheme, the law recognises the election and ordination of a pastor as a permanent settlement; so that, except there exists some special provision to the contrary, the popular voice cannot remove a Minister from his charge. And although the withdrawal of confidence on the part of a church from their pastor will, generally, induce him, for the sake of his own peace and respectability, to retire from the scene of strife, yet cases are very notorious in which the Minister has maintained his right by law, and kept possession of the pulpit, in despite of the opposition raised against him.

In the presence of all these practical difficulties, in the conservation of Christian doctrine and the perpetuity of a truly evangelical ministry the importance and value of the Poll Deed, in connexion with the provisions of Chapel Trusts and the Plan of Pacification, will be very evident. The primary object of the creation of a legal Conference was to preserve and perpetuate the Wesleyan theology. Hence it is made imperative that the four volumes of Sermons and Notes on the New Testament, shall form the basis of teaching through the entire Connexion, down to the latest period of time. The *onus* of securing this great design was laid in the first instance on the Conference, who have power to admit into their own body, only on the ground that the assenting parties subscribe to the doctrines taught and legalized by Mr. Wesley. As all appointments to preach must emanate, according to the enactments of this instrument, from the Conference, it follows, that a legal provision exists to secure the universal purity, according to Mr. Wesley's views, of evangelical truth. The chapels settled according to the Conference plan, are attached to that body for the same reason. It is not that the funds of the trust estate may fall into the hands of the Preachers—for, in truth, they have no controul over them; but the design was obviously to pre-

vent the places of worship from becoming marts of heterodoxy, and to perpetuate through all time the faithful and energetic preaching of the Wesleyan doctrines. After Mr. Wesley's death, to render his own purpose—the enactments of the Poll Deed and the provisions of the Trusts—as certain and efficacious as possible in their working, the Conference agreed, by the Plan of Pacification, to make all the officers of a Circuit, judges of the Preacher's doctrinal purity (as regards their own Circuit,) with power, if the majority judge fit, to prevent his polluting their pulpits by heretical opinions. As one of the principal enactments of the Trust Deed relates to doctrine, and makes the Trustees the conservators of its purity, of course they would have possessed a remedy in law, irrespective of this arrangement; but, by this, the Stewards and Leaders (who are much more intimately associated with the Societies, as spiritual officers,) are united in the design to preserve and perpetuate these doctrines entire.

Without intending to disparage any other Christian community, we venture to affirm that no church on earth has the same security on this point as the Wesleyan Societies. In consequence of the form of patronage existing in the Establishment, if a pious, evangelical, and useful Minister, should be placed in any particular parish, when removed by death or any other cause, no provision is made that his place shall be supplied by another of similar views and spirit. The cases of holy and useful men being succeeded by persons of an opposite character, together with the blight brought on their work, are of a most painful and distressing nature.—Whatever may be the provisions of the trusts of the Presbyterian chapels, we see that they have nearly all become Socinian; and for the want of a conserving power, this once celebrated, learned, pious, and influential Connexion has sunk into a state of spiritual decay and putrefaction.—Independent churches are voluntary associations of Christians, uniting together on the profession of the orthodox faith. When disputes arise, doctrinal or otherwise, the easy remedy is a separation. Not being “*united Societies*,” and having no connexional form, or dependence on each other, any change of sentiment produces but a limited effect. As these churches (except they go beyond their own platform,) propose nothing further by their union than a fellowship for mutual edification, and select and maintain their minister to secure that, it follows that the character of the ministry depending, as it does, on the living mind, will be pure and evangelical as long as the people themselves are right. We are thankful to acknowledge, that great numbers of the pastors of these churches rank amongst the most efficient Preachers, and brightest luminaries of the day.

Witnessing from every quarter the great disadvantage and injurious effects of an unsettled and unprotected doctrinal provision for the wants of the churches, and justly apprehending the perils which awaited his own Societies after his decease, Mr. Wesley, by the guidance of Divine providence, placed his system under the protection of law by the Deed of Declaration. The benefits of this are twofold: the legal establishment of these doctrines themselves, and then the creation of an administrative power to carry them into practical effect.

With regard to the first: Wherever Wesleyan Methodism is established, by a fine and exquisite provision of, what may be called, reciprocal law, all the chapels in the Connexion have the benefit of these doctrines, secured to them in such way, that the Trustees cannot legally suffer any other to be taught, and the Conference, with whom the power of appointment rests, cannot invade their pulpits by heretical Preachers.—These Deeds are so formed that neither party have any independent choice, as regards doctrine. Besides being entrusted with the estates for the benefit of the congregations assembling in the places of worship, the great body of Trustees are made, with the Conference, joint conservators of the doctrines of Mr. Wesley. Personally they may change their views, and become Calvinists, Quakers, Socinians, or Infidels; but if a majority should so alter their creed, they could not introduce their new doctrines into our chapels; because another party, perfectly independent of them, exists to check the intrusion. The obvious provisions of many religious and charitable establishments, have been evaded, by trustees and guardians changing their sentiments, and then appropriating the funds in their hands to the support of their *own*, and not the doctrines of the charitable founders. The case of Lady Hewley's charitable bequests, as well as numerous chapels erected by the old non-conformists, are in point. By a fraudulent misappropriation, estates of great value, known to be left to educate young men of the orthodox faith, and support a ministry and worship which set forth the Saviour's Deity and glories, have been for many years employed in the education of men whose avowed and settled object is to deny the Divinity of Christ, and preach *against* all those great verities of religion which the pious donor, not only considered essential, but actually made the reason and ground of the bequest itself. Now, the defect leading to this mischievous, and, indeed, ruinous result, arose out of the circumstance that no

second power was created to check the downward course of the delinquent party. Individuals, or the collective Societies belonging to these places, might, it is true, appeal to Chancery against the violation of their covenants, on the part of Trustees; but this is a remedy to which few could be expected to have recourse, as it is much easier quietly to retire to some orthodox church, and there enjoy the benefits of an evangelical ministry, than to carry on a precarious and protracted law-suit in a court of equity. Besides, the usual course of corruption is gradual. No thoroughly orthodox congregation has ever had its ears assailed, and its faith and piety outraged, by an instantaneous and direct proclamation of Socinianism. The decomposition of the creed and piety of their fathers, and the petrification of the forms and symbols of the church, after the life of truth, piety, and love, had taken its departure, has uniformly been through the process of Arianism, and of so refined a nature as not at first to be very obvious. Where is the certainty that this will not be the case in the Wesleyan Connexion?—In the simple, but important circumstance, that the power of Trustees is not absolute. They cannot appoint their own Ministers, and consequently have not the power to alter or amend the doctrinal standard of Mr. Wesley. The usual mode of corrupting the truth is, for degenerate churches to elect a pretended Minister of Jesus Christ to enunciate and propound their notions. Unhappily, great facilities exist for this. Men of degenerate piety, fallen character, desperate fortune, but competent education and talent, may be found, as the pastors of any flock and the advocates of the most infamous cause. The offshoots of Methodism would easily supply demands of this description. The wild offshoots of the Connexion which are obliged to be cut away periodically from the tree, by the knife of discipline, would grow most luxuriously in the hot-bed of heterodoxy.

Although it would be going too far to affirm, that it is utterly impossible that anti-scriptural and destructive doctrines can be introduced into the pulpits, and palmed on the congregations and Societies of the Wesleyan Connexion, yet they have certainly better security against such a moral plague-spot than any other community. This security exists in the two parties—the Trustees and the Conference—being independent of each other, and yet each possessing and exercising their authority on the basis of law. If they were voluntary bodies, distinct and independent in their constitution and functions, it might, and probably would, soon happen that the one would succumb, and finally be lost in the other; so that the most powerful body would become dominant, and then exercise an absolute authority, reaching to all the interests, doctrinal and otherwise, of the entire Connexion. This cannot now be the case. The two bodies are distinct in law. They have separate duties and functions, and yet relating to the same subject. This balance of power is the best security both of liberty and purity.

By this *unique* provision, the Wesleyan doctrines are established as extensively as the Connexion. Assuming that they are true, this is a great advantage. Stability in any community pre-supposes a settled creed; and a ministry to be extensively useful in the spread of the gospel and the conversion of men to God, must have its primary and first principles resting on a well-understood and common basis. This sentiment will be considered as narrow, and as interfering with freedom of thought and the exercise of original genius. This is not our desire or intention. There is a point in every man's public life, in which he is called honestly to exercise an independent judgment, and make his election accordingly. This is, especially, when he stands on the threshold of the ministry, and before he has entered it. Let him then be as independent as he pleases; use his utmost diligence to gain a large and extended view of the truth; compare the clashing creeds of different parties; submit to a strict and impartial scrutiny the varying forms of ecclesiastical government and discipline; weigh the doctrines proposed to him in the nicest balances of reason, and apply the hair-splitting subtilty of metaphysics in his examination; but, especially, let him, by study of the word of God, and prayer, embrace from his heart, those views of truth which accord with the sacred oracles. This is the period for independent thought and choice. Then the mind being honestly and fully made up, as to first principles, a creed should be embraced; and except the reasons for a change are paramount, it ought to be adhered to faithfully and constantly. The energies and resources of the soul are required in the sacred ministry, for other purposes than constantly expatiating in a world of ideal truths, or nicely balancing betwixt the claims of one creed and another. In this most arduous and responsible calling, the Minister has to bear a specific message; to propound, elucidate, and set forth, in plain, pointed, and nervous style, the grand and saving truths of the gospel; to bring to this task a fixed, settled, and unwavering persuasion of their truth and importance; to exhibit, in lucid, but at the same time, warm and persuasive language, the mode and the blessings of salvation; to pour forth on his listening auditory streams of affectionate and awaken-

ing exhortation; and moreover, he has to "take care of the flock committed to his care," by a kind and pastoral attention, as well as to "*take heed to his doctrine.*" As to genius and originality, if a Minister takes, as so many centres of truth, the doctrinal views of Mr. Wesley, he will find ample scope for the excursions of even a poetic imagination, and the most enlarged acquisitions of knowledge, in the field of illustration. One of the most favourable circumstances connected with Methodism is this firm and uniform establishment of her doctrines. If the platform of our operations be considered, in this empire and the foreign Missionary stations, and it is recollected that through this wide circumference the same scriptural and holy doctrine is being uniformly taught, like seed sown into the earth, it will be seen that great fruit must follow. It is impossible that the fall of man—the Divinity and atonement of Christ—the free justification of a sinner by grace, through faith—the conversion, regeneration, and sanctification of the soul—together with all the privileges belonging to these primary blessings, should be taught on so large a scale without deep and extensive moral effects being produced.

But, besides the legal establishment of the Wesleyan theology, co-extensive with the system itself, the same authority has provided an *executive*, to carry the design into effect. It is clear that articles of the purest doctrine may slumber in ineffective majesty within the precincts of a Christian church, just as enactments of law will be a mere dead letter without a living magistracy to carry them into effect. In the most cheerless and dreary period of the Establishment of this country, her articles, homilies, and liturgy, existed in their pristine purity and truth. The cause of the decay of religion was, consequently, the want of a living spiritual ministry to proclaim these truths, and in the spirit of the gospel to press them on the consciences and hearts of the people. The same catastrophe may befall any other church, and has, in fact, happened to nearly all. To guard against it the Wesleyan Conference was established on a legal instrument, to perpetuate for ever the preaching of the theology taught by the founder of the Connexion. None can be admitted into this body, but such as subscribe to these doctrines. If this provision, however, should be evaded, and the Conference became corrupt, in this respect, their power is instantly confronted by another independent of themselves, who have legal means effectually to prevent the mischief by closing all the chapels against their appointment. Much has been said respecting the legislative power of the Conference, with a view to render it odious to the people; whereas, in point of fact, it is much more an administrative body. We instance in respect to doctrine. The Conference enjoys no functions in regard to this vital and important subject, except executive. It possesses the right to examine candidates for the ministry, to admit members into its own body, and appoint them their Circuits; but in each case, the doctrinal standard left by their founder is made, not by their choice, but by his own legalized act, the condition. There is, consequently, no room for legislation here; and the same is the case with every thing vital and important in the Connexion.

The discipline exercised continuously over the Preachers is of the same nature. This discipline was attempted to be set aside, and a new mode introduced, by the Chancery suits prosecuted by Dr. Warren and his party; but their non-suit leaves the question as it originally existed, and establishes this discipline as a part of the legalized economy of the Connexion. Such a supervision of the ministerial functions as shall insure a faithful administration of the pure doctrines of the word of God, must be of the first consequence to a Christian community; because those doctrines are both the instrument of enlargement, in the conversion of wicked men, and the model on which the piety and character of the people will be framed. It is this consideration which makes it of paramount importance that the Conference should maintain its integrity. Our belief is, that Mr. Wesley would not have thought it of consequence enough to establish that body at all, had his object merely been to give it controul over chapel property; but his great design went to place the chapels in a state of security for the sake of perpetuating those blessed truths which had cost him much diligent study to acquire, and which he had seen produce the most glorious results in their propagation among mankind. As this was the great reason for the existence of this body, so it forms the principal one for its continuance. There may be other minor, and very important reasons for this union of Ministers, but they all fall very short of the first. Let the Conference stand on the principle of its original institution, and although many personal cases of apostacy and unfaithfulness may arise, yet hedged in and fenced round by the provisions of their own constitution, as well as the powers and rights of the Trustees, and by the Plan of Pacification, it will be next to impossible for the doctrines of the body to be corrupted.

These doctrines being left to us, by the blessing of God, the means of renovation in

cases of decay and of prosperity, *ad infinitum*, lie before us. Many storms and defections have arisen, at different times, to desolate and injure various parts of the Connexion, as well as the one now passing over us. But our doctrines and discipline remaining unimpaired in the midst of the destruction, the mischief has been repaired. The same is the case at present; and if any spirits droop by being brought into collision with evils which they lament and deplore, they may take the comfort of knowing, that all the great and essential principles of Methodism remain. Hitherto, the parties to whom the magnificent and awful trust has been reposed, have been faithful, and nothing has been yielded to the unreasonable, and if successful, fatal, clamour of the times. The friends of the old and well-tried system of Methodism may take heart at this consideration. That which seems most desirable now, is, that in all the places where commotion and division have existed, the Preachers, officers, and people should cordially unite to carry out the truths they hold in common, and by every prudent and practicable means, endeavour to make them tell on the surrounding population. But even in this, caution and prudence should be observed. In emergencies, men are apt to have recourse to expedients of artificial excitement, to produce a temporary effect and repair the damage occasioned by division. This often causes future, and it may be, even greater evils. Loose and sandy material, brought together in haste, for the purpose of re-building the house of God, rent and damaged by the storm, cannot stand; and if the experiment is attempted, it will most infallibly prove fatal to the future peace and safety of the Societies. Our advice is to trust to the goodness of God and the certain effects of His truth, and instead of being in impatient haste to fill up the vacant places of those who have left us, to *consolidate* as well as enlarge. It is, we know, extremely distressing, and requires, in both Ministers and people, the highest forms of both faith and courage, calmly to pass through a season of calamity of this description. But when all outward prosperity retires from our view, that is the time to repose on our principles, and seek the special aid of God. The "*supplies may be stopped*"—the church rent—the people and congregations depart—and a few faithful people only remain, who have sense and piety enough to refuse to bow the knee to the idols of the day; but all that which is of most value continues: the truth is unimpaired, and still reposes in the safe custody of those who, in evil and good report, by the grace of God, have hitherto refused to yield it to the invading enemy. Had the Connexion lost the truth, or by a state of impiety forfeited the key by which its treasures are unlocked, then there would be room for despondency; but as we believe neither of these evils have occurred, it only remains for the Preachers more plainly, broadly, pointedly, experimentally, and in the spirit of prayer, love, and compassion, to exhibit the whole salvation of God, as we have been taught by our great founder; and as certainly as the laws of nature repair the blights and damages of winter, by the smiling joys of returning spring, so the Spirit of God will bless the faithful enunciations of His own gospel to the restoration of "*the waste places of our Zion*." With the faithful word, there must be a faithful, united, holy, and praying people. Moral evils amongst Societies may prevent the success of the gospel, as well as the same evil amongst Preachers. It is readily allowed, on all hands, that even the truth, in the hands of unconverted and immoral men, is not blessed, except in rare cases, to the conversion of wicked men and the enlargement of the church of God. The same is the case with regard to a corrupt, secular, disorganized, Antinomian, and factious church. How can God pour out His Spirit, give power and efficacy to His word, or manifest His presence and grace amongst such a people? If the remaining members of the troubled Societies can be united in closer affection, abandon the region of strife, cultivate a spirit of deep experimental piety, breathe the love and goodwill of the gospel to all men, exercise themselves in the habit and acts of fervent prayer, cultivate sobriety and steadiness in their countenance and attendance on the ordinances of religion, and in their families and the world bear their meek and Christian, but faithful testimony to the truth, we shall soon have the delight to behold "*the wilderness bloom as the garden of the Lord*."

THE NEW CONNEXION AND THE ASSOCIATION IN LONDON.

The metropolitan Association have lately held a second public meeting, in which some serious, but groundless charges were alleged against the Wesleyan Conference. It was with feelings of unutterable disgust that we read of these reviling Associationists having "*kindly* lent to them for the occasion," the chapel recently erected by the New Connexion; one of whose Travelling Preachers concluded the unchristian proceedings

of the assembly with prayer and supplication. Though such a manifestation of enmity to the old Connexion and of benignity to its slanderers awakened our indignation, yet it did not in the least surprise us. We are too well acquainted with the tactics of Mr. Kilham's disciples to have thought, even for a single moment, that some strange thing had happened unto us. We are deeply convinced that the loan of the new chapel to Mr. Eckett and Co. was intended to increase the New Connexion in London—just as it has been augmented in many English towns and villages—*by gaining a number of proselytes.*

The metropolis is said to contain a million and a-half of souls, most of whom, there is reason to fear, are far from God and are seeking death in the error of their ways. Yet the New Connexion cannot form a cause of any respectable magnitude, in the midst of this dense population, by the fair, honourable, and Christian method of preaching the gospel of our Lord and Saviour. The long trial which the New system has had in London *belies* all the declarations which have been copiously poured forth of its particular adaptation to spread Christianity among “the people that sit in darkness and in the region of the shadow of death.” Some persons will strive to resist the force of this conclusion by saying, that it has wanted suitable agents, and has had to struggle with great difficulties. Such an attempt, however, is a vain thing. We ask these individuals—Why has not the system *created* the requisite agents? And why has it not *conquered* the circumstances opposed to its success?—Its powerless spirit, is the only answer which will satisfactorily meet the case. Unless a form of doctrine and discipline contains a powerfulness to create agents when they are needed, and to triumph over obstacles when they present themselves to view, it is not adapted to diffuse scriptural holiness through the land. The order of things which is established in the New community is destitute of this efficiency; and the fact is most strikingly proved by the melancholy history to which we invite the attention of our readers.

The New Connexion was formed in 1797; but it did not extend to London until the year 1800. It then appeared as a circuit on the Minutes, with thirty-three members. As the Conference of 1799 had not appointed a Preacher to labour there, it is most likely that the above members were *seceders* from some religious body. Such was the commencement of New Connexion Methodism in London. Now, let us mark its progress. Preachers were regularly sent by the Conference; and they, no doubt, did their best to multiply the thirty-three into as many hundreds and thousands. And what was the result?—In the Minutes of 1810, after the zealous labours of nine years, there was an increase reported. But to what amount? A thousand?—No. A hundred?—No. A score?—No. A dozen?—No. A half-a-dozen?—No. *It was a unit;* for the thirty-three had advanced to thirty-four! The Minutes, however, of 1811, announce a most serious decrease. Not only was the one lost, but oh! sad to tell, the thirty-three were not to be found!! *All, all* were missing! We believe, that, after they had forsaken the New ship, they went on board another vessel, named the Independent. As a certain writer is evidently partial to looking at things as they have occurred in the Methodist world, for the space of ten years, we most respectfully invite his attention to the instructive history of the New Connexion in London, from 1800 to 1811!

For some years after this period, the Body had no “interest” in London; and this was a source of great discontentment. A Methodist Connexion without a Society in the chief city of Great Britain, seemed like a body without a head. Still, no call was heard to go up and possess the land. It is true that immense masses of people were in the broad way that leadeth to destruction, and they required men of faith and zeal to seek and save them. Moreover, the British government was willing to protect any Ministers who would enter on occupations so laudable and important. Nevertheless, these circumstances did not constitute “a call,” in the estimation of the New Connexion. A call, with them, is a rent in some Christian community; especially if the expelled party, no matter what is their character, send for a Preacher to a snug junto of aristocrats, styled the Annual Committee. Such a call, after long patience, was heard in London, in 1819. It, therefore, re-appears as a circuit, after a painful ab-

sence of eight years, on the Minutes, as containing five chapels, six Societies, twenty-two Local Preachers, and one hundred and eighty-six members! This was considered a most excellent "opening." We are aware that some of our readers may inquire—Who built these five chapels—formed these six Societies—and judged these twenty-two lay-men qualified to teach sinners the way to heaven? To such a question we are merely able to give a negative reply: *not the New Connexion*. This religious Body went to reap that whereon they bestowed no labour; other men laboured, and they entered into their labours. It is one of the distinguishing *glories* of the New Methodists to gather harvests without the previous trouble and cost of breaking up the fallow ground, and casting in the seed! If some persons were to call it a dishonest procedure, they would, of course, be branded as narrow-minded, and illiberal! So much for the spirit of the age!

It will readily be conceded that the New Connexion entered upon the wide field of the mother city under much more auspicious circumstances in 1819 than they did in 1800. They found many Preachers, chapels, and Societies ready to receive and assist them; and, therefore, great things were justly expected to be accomplished, in the conviction and conversion of transgressors: the five chapels were to be increased, in size and number; and the six Societies were to be strengthened and multiplied. Well, and what has been effected?—**NOTHING!!** Notwithstanding all their efforts to swell their numbers, they have not made the least progress. Two Preachers have frequently been stationed there, yet the vessel has been "water-logged," and, consequently, unable to make way. They opened a respectable chapel about eight years ago, but they shortly afterwards lost it! The Minutes of 1835 assert the London circuit to consist of four Societies, ten Local Preachers, and one hundred and eighty-nine members! Now, if we compare this account with the one published by the Conference in 1819, we shall find an increase of *three* members, and a *decease* of *two Societies*, and of *twelve Local Preachers!!* Such is the glorious prosperity of the lay-delegation plan in our principal city during the last *sixteen* years.

Having demonstrated that the New Connexion, after a trial of *twenty-seven* years, cannot succeed in turning London sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, we shall reiterate our belief that they are endeavouring to draw members from other communities into their own. As they are unable to evangelize, they will do their utmost to proselyte.* They are looking with most pleasing anticipations to the London Association for the augmentation of their poor Societies and congregations. Their new chapel was "kindly lent," to give the Eckettites an opportunity to commit offences, for which they knew those wholesale slanderers must be excluded the Wesleyan connexion. And when this deserved excommunication shall have been pronounced, what then? These unconvincing, but proselyting Methodists will sympathize with them, as persons who *have been most unjustly and tyrannically treated*, and will invite them into their community, as a peaceful asylum from oppression and persecution!! So much for the dishonourable cunning of the New Connexion, and the pitiable simplicity of the London Association.

Let Wesleyan Methodists ponder in their hearts the interesting and admonitory facts to which we have solicited their notice; let them abhor with their whole souls the proselyting spirit that we have *illuminated*; let them see the deceitfulness of those high pretensions which are made of the superior excellence of the New Connexion system of church government; let them love Wesleyan Methodism, which seeks in order to save the lost, with an increasing affection; and let them pray and labour, that the two grand sciences of Methodist theology and polity, may be preserved in their purity, and be faithfully transmitted from age to age, until the angel of the Lord shall swear by Him that liveth for ever and ever, that there shall be time no longer.

* The New Connexion has been proselyting during the last few years, among various religious bodies. Though their greatest success is among the Wesleyans, yet they have increased the number of their Societies out of the Cookites, the Revivalist Methodists, the Primitive Methodists, and the Independent Methodists! We shall leave these facts to speak for themselves.

ASSOCIATION FIDELITY AND HONOUR.

A correspondent of the *Advocate*, called "Argus," in a communication, dated "Kingsland-road, Dec. 11, 1835," writes as follows:—

"They" (the Preachers) "often shake hands cordially with some determined reformer," (who, of course, "shake hands *cordially*" with them;) "take a glass of wine with some members of the Association," (who invites them to his house and professes special affection;) "and give tickets to Leaders, Stewards, Trustees, and others, who have signed 'declarations' totally inimical to Methodism as it is;" (such, for instance, as the famous "Address," calling upon the country to put down the Methodist Preachers, by act of Parliament, as a public pest; and then come and *take* their tickets, in token of their Christian love and fellowship, with these same Preachers.) "This *I know* to be the case. At Edmonton, for example, there are active agents of reform," (viz. a whole batch of this sort of people,) "including Leaders, Stewards, and Trustees, who have signed *all the documents* issued by the London Trustees, and who are *bona fide* members of the Association." (Still "shaking hands" with the Preachers, giving them "wine," and regularly *accepting* the appointed token of brotherly love; and all this most "*cordially*.") "I would suggest, therefore," (quoth *Argus*,) "that 'John Mason' should issue circulars to the agitators themselves, to the Secretaries of the Association, and to Chairmen of meetings. Thus a *correct* return of the strength of the reforming party might be obtained."

From all which it would appear, that "Argus," with the "Secretaries," and "Chairmen," have no objection to complete their perfidy, and become Conference spies upon their brethren, in the pay of "John Mason." The lure thrown out in order to secure the appointment, is, that *thus a correct return* may be obtained, on the principle of "set a thief to catch a thief." Whatever may be the value of their information, we think the Book Steward will scarcely have the hardihood to employ them, though, we dare say, they would not be unreasonable about wages; for they would, doubtless, sell the whole family of the Edmonton Iscariots, and Dr. Warren into the bargain, for considerably less than "thirty pieces of silver."

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

"Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny."

SIR—Of all the strange things that have occurred in the world, few have given me greater surprise than the late divisions among the Wesleyan Methodists. I am aware of the fickleness of mankind in general, and that popular applause is often of short duration; for the man, or the system, that the multitude applaud one day, they will execrate the next. We have a striking picture of this strange inconsistency in the fourteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. But that men seriously professing godliness could imitate such an example, I never believed until it had been demonstrated by recent events.

I would take what I conceive to be a plain, common-sense view of the reasons which have been assigned for this strange conduct; and I will begin with the case of Ashton-under-line. I pity the deluded Methodists of that town. What is the reason that so many hundreds withdrew from our Connexion? Simply this: because the Minister appointed to labour among them was not permitted to continue a spouting political demagogue, on subjects calculated to awaken in the mind every feeling contrary to Christian love. Where do we find in the word of God the first preachers of righteousness acting in such a way? On the subject which occupied Mr. Stephens's attention—the separation of Church and State—there is much difference of opinion in our congregations; and if a Preacher agitates either side of the question, he must necessarily give offence, and hinder his usefulness. The proper work of a Minister of Jesus Christ is, to save souls; and if my opinion coincided with that of Mr. Stephens on the above subject, still I should strongly condemn his conduct; for if he had been permitted to act as he wished, why not allow another Preacher to advocate the destruction of the House of Lords—and another the subversion of the monarchy? Thus we might have for our Ministers a set of political incendiaries, instead of a body of faithful pastors; and who does not see that the annihilation of Methodism would infallibly be the result?

Perhaps a still more astonishing secession is the one at Gateshead, where 800 persons, with the sagacious Joseph Forsyth, have gone over to another body of Methodists. And

for what?—Because the Conference—the faithful guardian of Methodism, as Mr. Wesley left it—would not suffer him to preach heterodox doctrine! “O shame, where is thy blush?” Though I have been a Wesleyan Methodist for thirty years, yet if the Conference were to permit its members to preach any doctrine which is not Wesleyan, I would at once forsake the Connexion. I have read a little of what Mr. Forsyth has published to the world, and I was astonished at his confidence, bitterness, and impudence; he seems to think it blasphemy not to see as he sees! Poor conceited man! I can tell him that men of a thousand times greater grasp of intellect than ever he possessed, have believed in the Eternal Sonship, and derived comfort from it. Mr. Wesley was a firm believer in this doctrine, and we must have our creed as that venerable man has left it. I hope the day will never arrive, when our doctrines and discipline must be altered at the suggestion of a set of whimsical innovators.

I have now shortly to consider the secessions which have taken place in consequence of the part Dr. Warren has acted. I do indeed feel for the poor silly sheep, that he and his coadjutors have beguiled from the fold. I read the Dr.’s first pamphlet with attention; and I will assert, that it must convince any candid mind, that it was nothing but disappointed ambition which gave rise to his opposition. If the Theological Institution must have been called a College, and if he had been proposed to fill the office of President, his pride would have been gratified. He hypocritically talks of the rights of the people—for I know the man; and I ever believed that if there was a man among our Preachers more distinguished than another, for an arbitrary spirit, and a wish to rule like a despot, that man was the *amiable* Doctor, who appears to have imbibed the temper of Milton’s Devil—

“’Tis better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven.”

Methodism as it is, has been made a blessing to the world. In all its essential parts, we have it as bequeathed to us by Mr. Wesley; and I trust that no number of profane hands will ever spoil the lovely edifice. Let its enemies continue to pour forth their fetid calumnies, if the Preachers as a body will only continue faithful to the trust reposed in them, the system as it is, shall bless hundreds of unborn generations.

I once attended, out of curiosity, an Association meeting, in a town not one hundred miles from Manchester. It was addressed by Barns (the publican and sinner), Grindrod, Farrar, Greenhalgh, Barlow, and the editor of a contemptible pamphlet, called the *Lantern*. The most deliberate falsehoods—for I knew them to be such—were told, to calumniate the Methodist Preachers and discipline; and a fine treat it was to the infidels, Unitarians, and profligates, who formed the greatest part of the company. I shall never forget the phrenzied joy of a Socinian, whom I have known for many years as a radical of the first water in politics, and a hater of Methodism, in applauding the ribaldry of Barns, he shouted, stamped, and clapped, with voice, feet, and hands, at once. The chairman, who is an Independent, and some individuals who have been expelled from the Methodist Body for their filthy crimes, seemed to exult in the prospect of demolishing Methodism. A branch of the Grand Central Association was formed under the guidance of a motley group of individuals, *lovers of game*, expelled Local Preachers, and persons with short memories, who have forgotten to pay their arrears of pew-rent in the old tabernacle before they went to the new one. From such foes the Connexion has nothing to fear; for are such societies as this to reform the Wesleyan system? How disgustingly contemptible is the thought! “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.”

Mr. Editor—I cannot refrain, before I conclude, from informing you, that the town of Warrington has lately been visited by that reviler of our Preachers, the *amiable* Dr. Warren. He preached in a small chapel belonging to some odd fellows, called Quaker Methodists; and his text was, “Fear not little flock,” &c.; but if I were to furnish you with a sketch of the characters of the leading members of the Association flock here, I think you would believe that their “father” was a *black* sheep!! In the evening of the following day, the Dr. delivered a lecture, three hours long, to a singularly mixed audience, with, I believe, not half a dozen Wesleyans among them. Such was his bitterness of spirit, that John Gordon never exceeded him. The chair was occupied by a fellow called Meredith, who, at different times, has been connected with nearly all the denominations in the town several times over; he has been sprinkled, and he has been immersed, and circumcised too, for aught I know! At the close of the lecture, a collection was made, a few coppers obtained, and the Dr. sent home the next day by the Old Quay packet.

The Wesleyan Ministers need not fear the banditti which the Devil has raised up to assail them. The honoured names of Messrs. Bunting, Newton, and their coadjutors, will be venerated in ages to come, for the noble stand they have made in the hour

of trial; and the words of the prophet will encourage them to persevering faithfulness :
 "The Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one ; therefore my persecutors shall stumble
 and they shall not prevail ; they shall be greatly ashamed, for they shall not prosper :
 their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten."
 VINDICATOR.

KEIGHLEY :

Shewing that "Agitators" are not always received, nor "Delegates" always appointed, nor "Lanterns" always prized, nor "Pamphlets" always followed by the intended effect.

The Keighley Circuit is in a state of perfect tranquillity, from end to end. Previous to Conference, a deputation from the "Grand Central Association" came to this town, uninvited, to prepare the way for Dr. Warren. They were two persons professing to be members of the Wesleyan Connexion—one from Liverpool, and the other from Manchester. Having found their way, in a somewhat curious manner, to the house of a person who was then a leading member of the Protestant Methodists of this town, but who has since then returned to the old Body, they requested him to introduce them to the company of some of the "liberal-hearted Methodists," that they might have a little conversation with them. But on being informed by the same individual that he did not think there was a Leader, or Steward, or Local Preacher, in this town, who would like to be seen in the street with them, as members of the Association, they said it would not then be of any use for them to remain ; and they accordingly left Keighley for Skipton, on the same afternoon on which they arrived, having been only a few hours in the town. We have had no more of them from that time to this, nor do I know of any one of our people who has any desire to see them.

Among the delegates who met at Manchester, and afterwards at Sheffield, one was said to be from the Keighley Circuit. But the fact is, the person who went from Keighley was the Superintendent Preacher of the Protestant Methodists of this town, and, as I am informed, was *not sent by any people*, but went of *his own choice*.

A few weeks ago, a parcel containing many numbers of the *Lantern* was sent from a neighbouring Circuit to one of our Leaders in a large country Society. But when he saw what they were, he returned them to the person who had sent them, as things not fit to be circulated among a pious people who wish to "live in peace."

All our Societies are pretty well supplied with the "Official Documents" from our Minutes of the present year ; and, I believe, are highly pleased with the uncompromising firmness of our Conference, in maintaining the great principles of Wesleyan Methodism. And from the clear explanation which has been of our laws, they appear both to understand and to love Methodism better than ever they did, and to entertain a growing assurance that it is of God, and that no man, nor number of men, will be able to overthrow it.

Various inflammatory pamphlets, from the Association, have been clandestinely circulated among our people, from the time of Dr. Warren's suspension. But the chief end they have answered, in this Circuit, has been that of convincing our people, that the spirit which originated them has not been that of Christian charity, but of mortified pride and bitter malignity.

A "GREAT ACTION."

"A few weeks since, Dr. Warren and Graham, jun., made their appearance in Bradford, in order to agitate and disturb our peaceful Societies in these Circuits. They held their meeting (for want of a more convenient place, in a room occupied by persons calling themselves 'Gospel Pilgrims.*' The room was crowded with a heterogeneous group of persons of various descriptions and denominations, many of whom were drawn together from that curiosity that would have led them to attend any other meeting, where abuse and lies are the general topics of conversation ; others to spend an idle hour, and a few to hear what would be said by a man, once reputed a Methodist Preacher and a learned person. The only effects produced by the speeches at this meeting, were—pity, contempt, and disgust. Pity—for the poor Doctor, from whose head the crown has fallen, and for his miserable, degraded condition ; contempt—for his arguments ; and disgust—at his language and volumes of abuse. The whole concern was a complete failure, on the part of the Doctor and his *satellite* ; as complete as if he had attempted to raise the billows of the sea by blowing on it with a pair of bellows!"

We suppress the reflections of our excellent correspondent, and shall not presume to add any of our own, recollecting the story of the disobedient Prophet, and wishing

* To the credit of the Baptists, Independents, and Primitive Methodists, none of them would lend their chapels to the Doctor, for this bad purpose. We know not who would, except those who cherish a most magnanimous contempt for the opinions of the pious and peaceably-disposed part of the religious community ; or such persons as the Rev. Mr. Fletcher, who has already been before an ecclesiastical tribunal.

to imitate the magnanimity of the king of beasts:—"And he went and found his carcase cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcase: the lion had not eaten the carcase, nor torn the ass."—1 Kings, xiii. 28.

THE SUBLIME AND THE RIDICULOUS.

It has been thought, and said, that C. Parker, Esq. would have no objection to a seat in the House of Commons, and that one step towards establishing a reputation as a reformer, was, to reform Darlington Methodism. It seems, the Methodists there will not be reformed by him, and that if he get into the "House" at all, he must not enter by this sheepfold, but climb up some other way.

"Our recent secession, (headed, observe, by Mr. P.) has hitherto been accompanied with indications that God will overrule it for the good of Methodism in the Circuit. The anti-christian attempts which have been employed have brought the friends more closely together, and made them determined, in the name of God, to resist, to the utmost of their power, all attacks on the economy of Methodism as it is. The dissentients declared, with great confidence, the destruction of Methodism in this neighbourhood. Thank God, we have no reason to suppose that we shall lose two hundred members in the whole Circuit. Attempts of a very painful nature have been in operation, through a great part of the year, to injure the Mission cause; but so effectual a counteracting influence has hereby been called into existence, that all such attempts are being proved abortive. Since Conference, we have held eight Missionary meetings in the Circuit, every one of which has increased its contributions above last year. Notwithstanding the strong opposition we have had to sustain, I shall not be surprised if, when we close our Mission accounts for the year, it appear we have advanced thirty pounds above last year. Our congregations are good. You are aware that we passed two loyal resolutions at our last Quarterly Meeting, and paid off the Circuit debt (nearly £60!)"

To have been carried into the "House," on the broad shoulders of Methodist reform, would have been—the sublime! To be a reformer thrown out of employment is—the ridiculous!

FALLEN GREATNESS.

"Last year, there were some persons in the Burslem Circuit desirous of assisting Warren and Co. in the work of reformation; but, I believe, they are heartily tired of contentions, and perfectly ashamed of the Doctor and his *masters*. At present we are, thank God, peaceful; no attempt to agitate, of which I am aware, has been made, directly or indirectly, since Conference; except by a person of the name of Hancock, who, according to his own confession, was one of the proprietors of the *Liverpool Circular*. He took the chair at two of Warren's public meetings, in this neighbourhood, went to Sheffield as a delegate, and after his return continued to circulate the *Lantern*. At the Michaelmas visitation he was required to give a pledge that he would cease his hostilities to Methodism, which he refused to do, and therefore his ticket was withheld. It is now three months ago, and I have not heard of one individual but approves of what has been done. Hancock, I must say, has been shamefully treated; not one of his old friends stands by him, or sympathizes with him—he is 'forgotten as a dead man out of mind.' He, however, has the consolation of believing that he is 'faithful found among the faithless.' During the present quarter we have witnessed the conversion of sinners from the error of their ways, several have found peace, and are now 'walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost.' The late storm has not done the least injury in this Circuit."

It is very confounding to human pride, to see Dr. Warren, once the head of the "Grand Central," collecting farthings to pay for his "grand law-suit,"—the renowned *Advocate* literally begging his bread; Cardinal Wolsey standing at the door of a monastery, calling himself a poor old man, and craving "a little earth for charity,"—and Hancock living till he is become as "a dead man out of mind!"

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are obliged by the kind communications from Bradford West, Carnarvon, Hallowes, Walsall, Darlington, Burslem, Holt, Dunbar, St. Agnes, Blackburn, Stockton, and Keighley; and respectfully request a continuance, through the same medium.

The TITLE-PAGE and INDEX will be published in a few days, and may be had with the next number. The first Volume of this work can then be obtained from any respectable bookseller, neatly bound in cloth, gilt lettered.

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION ;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES ; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY ; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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THE CAMELFORD CASE.

THE following documents will sufficiently open this extraordinary case. We may premise, that it appears, from a printed letter in our hands, that the original offence taken on the part of Mr. Rosevear, arose out of the Church and State question, as entered into by the Manchester District Meeting, and approved by the Conference. This, it seems, caused him to "cut" with that body.

The following is a copy of a letter which was addressed to the Superintendent of the Camelford Circuit :—

"Barn Park, August 27, 1834.

"Dear Sir—Having decided on making a complete 'cut' with a despotic and tyrannical Conference, I have judged it to be a needful act of courtesy on my part, toward yourself, to inform you of it ; and further, that you may not regard any thing I may in future happen to say or do in consequence, as at all involving your personal conduct or character. The course which I mean to pursue, is to *cease* from aiding the Conference Fund generally ; as also from contributing toward the erection of any building to be settled on what is termed 'the Conference Plan.'—I am, &c.

"THOMAS P. ROSEVEAR."

"WESLEYAN REFORM.—CAMELFORD CIRCUIT, CORNWALL.

"At a Quarterly Meeting held at Camelford, on Monday, the 29th December, 1834 ; the Superintendent having refused to put the motions which had been handed to him, William Grose, Esq., of Penpont, was called to the chair. The following resolutions were moved by T. P. Rosevear, Esq., of Barn Park, and seconded by Mr. John Davey, of Wadebridge.

"RESOLVED, *first*—That it is the opinion of this meeting that the Conference has acted prematurely in establishing the Theological Institution ; the Rule of Pacification, adopted in 1797, requiring that, "In order to prevent any degree of precipitation in making NEW RULES, and to obtain information of the sentiments of our people on every such rule, we have agreed to the article mentioned under the 7th head ; by which no regulations will be finally confirmed till after a year's consideration, and the knowledge of the sentiments of the Connexion at large, through the medium of all their public officers."

"*Second*—That this meeting do respectfully, but firmly, request that the Theological Institution be forthwith abandoned, as being uncalled for by the body of the people.

"*Third*—That full scope be given in the regular meetings for the discussion of ALL questions which the people wish to make known to the Conference.

"*Fourth*—That the officers of the Connexion be tried by the meetings to which they respectively belong, and that no one be removed from his office except by the consent of a majority of that meeting ; and that no private member be expelled but by the vote of a majority of the Leaders' Meeting.

"*Fifth*—That this meeting deeply regrets that a custom too generally prevails, of the Preacher quitting the chair on the discussion of any subject of which he may dis-

approve, thereby dissolving the Meeting, and depriving the further proceedings of their official character. This Meeting, therefore, recommends that there be a lay delegate chosen for each Circuit, to meet the Preachers at the next Conference, in order to recast all the rules adopted since 1797, and the usages of the Connexion, into such a code of laws as may appear most suited to the present advanced state of the Societies.

"Sixth—That this meeting resolves on withholding their contributions from all the funds, excepting such as are necessary for meeting the local demands of this Circuit, until the Theological Institution be entirely laid aside, and the foregoing regulations be adopted by the Conference; unless a decided majority of the people in the Connexion express themselves to the contrary.

"Seventh—That these resolutions be forwarded to the President of the Conference; and be published in the *Christian Advocate*, *Cornish Guardian*, and *West Briton*, newspapers; and that a subscription to defray the expense be received by the Chairman.

"WILLIAM GROSE, Chairman.

"It was afterwards RESOLVED—That the thanks of the meeting be respectfully offered to the Chairman, for his prompt and valuable assistance on this occasion."

COPY OF A LETTER ADDRESSED TO T. P. ROSEVEAR, ESQ. :—

"Camelford, January 21, 1835.

"Sir—I deeply regret at length to find that the olive-branch of peace, which was sent you last week by the Chairman of this District, has not been accepted by you; he having received no answer to the conciliatory communication, which he sent you. The only resource for me, therefore, is to put the discipline of Methodism in force against you; and be it remembered, that this is done by me, *not through a pusillanimous fear of 'the powers that be,'* but from a deliberate and conscientious persuasion that the proceedings intended are abstractedly righteous in the sight of God. On this subject I have reflected deeply, prayed sincerely, and advised with men of much more wisdom and experience than myself; and to this circumstance alone you are to attribute the delay which has taken place. My plan is this: I wish you to hold yourself in readiness to take your trial, on the undermentioned charges, before your own Leaders' Meeting, at Boscastle; giving you the option, in connexion with Brothers Thomas, Gard, Brown, and Mead, of fixing your own time and place of meeting.* I shall be ready to attend you any day this week—premising only, that I wish the time of meeting not to interfere with my evening appointments. On Monday if will be inconvenient for me to attend you; but, if you find it impossible to effect the requisite arrangements this week, I am willing to meet you on Tuesday next. The following are the three charges which I mean to prefer against you.

"1. After the regular Quarterly Meeting at Camelford, on the 29th December last, had been dissolved by the Superintendent's quitting the chair, you proposed to the friends then assembled a series of resolutions; several of which, in the estimation of every sober and candid lover of Methodism, were highly factious and evidently subversive of our present constitution;—witness the four last.

"2. Contrary to the provisions of the Plan of Pacification—which declares, that 'Quarterly Meetings, rejecting a new rule, shall not, by publications, public meetings, or otherwise, make that rule a cause of contention; but shall strive, by every means, to preserve the peace of the Connexion,'—you caused the above-mentioned resolutions to be published in several newspapers.

"3. In the publications above alluded to, you interpolated, and represented as having passed almost unanimously, a motion which was not even submitted to the illegal meeting in question; and, though subsequently warned of this fact, you have hitherto neglected any public contradiction of your former statement.

"I shall now conclude by observing, that the above-mentioned form of proceeding has not been dictated or embodied to me by any individual, but is exclusively of my own framing, upon the principles laid down in the printed Minutes of Conference.—Again deeply regretting the absolute necessity of such a painful prosecution of one, who has been so long a friend of Methodism, and sincerely sympathising with the kind-hearted Mrs. R.,

I am, Sir, yours most respectfully,

"AQUILA BARBER."

* My reason for thus leaving the time and place of Mr. R.'s trial to his own choice, was, that his bodily infirmities having for years prevented his attendance at the chapel, it would have been obviously indelicate to summon him to the bar in his own house; and my motive for proposing to try him before the Leaders and Stewards only of the Boscastle Society, instead of including Trustees also, was, that the Boscastle chapel is Mr. R.'s private property, the income of which he has regularly appropriated as he has seen fit; consequently, he had no co-trustees in the place where he was a member of Society.

To the above letter I received, during the next day, the following reply, which, to show the *animus* of the writer, was directed on the outside, to "Mr. A. Barber," but, on the inside, it was without any superscription whatever. I have copied it with its own peculiar emphasis:—

"Barn Park, January 22, 1835.

"I have just received your canting, impertinent note, of yesterday's date. I had nearly made up my mind never more to write a line to one of those falsely called 'reverend gentlemen,' who had so *publicly* dared to sign 'a declaration of war against the people.' But, remember, this is my last *act of courtesy, long-suffering, and forbearance*, toward a man, who knows not how to conduct himself as a Christian gentleman. Put but one of your injurious fingers, through the loop-hole of your priestly castle, on *my* REPUTATION—a man of long-established civil, commercial, and moral character—and I will, without further notice, open the 'King's Bench' battery on you, and all who may dare to act with you in such a nefarious movement, as you threaten to make against one of the kings protected subjects. Ye fools and blind! who do you think you have to deal with in this *PRIESTLY warfare*? Did you ever hear of one Thomas Hill? Do you recollect the consequences of his *ill-advised* movements? If you have never found your way into the school of common practical sense, I advise you to do so on receiving this. Mind, you shall not trifle with either my *name or character*, further than you have *already* done. I know more of your *movements, sayings, and doings*, than you are aware. If you have any *oral* communications to make, you are at liberty to make them through my brother, Mr. J. Rosevear, one of the Trustees of the Wesleyan chapel, Camelford.

THOMAS P. ROSEVEAR."

On the same day that I wrote to Mr. Rosevear, I sent a letter also to Mr. J. Mead, one of the Boscastle Leaders, as well as a Circuit-Steward and Local Preacher; giving him a copy of my letter to Mr. R., and requesting him to take the requisite measures for holding the projected trial. To this communication I received the following answer:—

"Boscastle, January 22, 1835.

"My dear Sir—Your favor of yesterday came to hand this morning. Immediately on its reception, I thought it proper, as an act of courtesy, in the first place to wait on Mr. R., to whom I communicated the contents of your note. I found him, however, most decidedly opposed to listen, for a moment, to any thing like the propositions contained in your letter, and perfectly ridicules the idea of your putting him on his trial. Under these circumstances, I have declined taking any further steps in the business; as it must now remain with yourself to adopt such measures as you conceive to be requisite. With kind regards to Mrs. B. and family,

"I remain, my dear Sir, yours very truly,

"JOHN MEAD."

On the day I received this answer, I had also an interview with Mr. Mead; and, during a conversation of some hours, I repeatedly and formally put to him the question—Whether I was to consider his letter to me as meaning that Mr. R. positively refused to take his trial? and he invariably answered in the affirmative; at the same time stating, that he had told Mr. R. he should inform me so. Notwithstanding this, however, on the following day, I received another letter from Mr. M. The under-written is a copy:—

"Boscastle, January 23, 1835.

"My dear Sir—This morning I had another interview with Mr. R., for the purpose of distinctly ascertaining, whether I was to understand myself as officially deputed by him to announce to you his determination not to stand his trial. On this point, and on every other connected with it, he refused to communicate with me in the above character, 'having,' as he said, 'already pointed Mr. B. to another channel of communication—my brother at Camelford.'—I remain, my dear Sir, yours most truly,

"JOHN MEAD."

As to my communicating with Mr. J. Rosevear on this subject, I had

the two following insurmountable objections:—In the first place, he was not even a member of our Society, and consequently could not be allowed to interfere with our church discipline; and, in the second, he is the brother of Mr. T. P. Rosevear, who, it will be recollected, had previously threatened me with legal proceedings if I should dare to put the discipline of the Connexion in force against him. I must have been bereft of common sense to plunge into a pit so obviously dug to entrap me. I, therefore, determined to let the matter rest until the regular quarterly renewal of the tickets. Shortly after this, the following printed circular was issued among the Local Preachers in the Circuit. This also I have copied with its own peculiar emphasis:—

“Jesus called them unto him and said—Ye know that the Lords of the Gentiles have domination over them, and they that are GREAT exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great and chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of Man came not to be served, BUT TO SERVE, and to give his life for the ransom for many.—*Old translation.*”

“Esteemed Friends—Astounding as it may sound in your ears, the daring attempt has been made, by a ‘*certain individual*,’ to insidiously cast me out of the Methodist Connexion; or, in the elegant priestly slang of the despotic Conference party, to ‘expel me from the Body.’ The first attempt has, indeed, been impiously made, and, with the usual quantum of ‘*religious cant*,’ as being ‘THE ONLY RESOURCE to put the DISCIPLINE of METHODISM in force against you (Mr. Rosevear); and be it remembered, that this is done *by me*, (the suffragan!) *not through a pusillanimous fear of the powers that be*, but from a *deliberate and conscientious* persuasion that the proceedings intended are *righteous* in the sight of GOD!!!”

“Hear this, all ye *Local Preachers*—ye disinterested, unpaid, Sabbath-day labourers in the gospel vineyard—and begin to ask yourselves, In what land do I dwell?—in *popedom*, or in the land of religious freedom!! The crime charged is, in short, that *deadly offence* committed at our last Quarterly Meeting against their High Mightinesses, the LORDS OF CONFERENCE, in advocating the *civil and religious liberties* of all the king’s subjects, together with the *right of petition*, which the king himself denies to none, even to the most abject.

“My *civil and religious liberties* are too dear to me, to allow them to be recklessly trifled with by *any man*, or number of men, be they who they may. The *first* daring attempt I have resisted at the *onset*; and I am credibly informed, that, in consequence of my so resisting, this ‘*certain individual*’* says he has ‘*no other course to take but to DROP MY NAME FROM THE PLAN, and to WITHHOLD MY TICKET!!*’ Now, my esteemed friends, my *appeal* lies at your door. Will you allow this stranger—I ask you, ‘one and all,’—will you allow this ‘stranger† to our soil,’ thus to treat your *elder brother*; and thus, with *impious* hand and *priestly* malice, to ‘*cut off*,’ as he has said, ‘the top branch first?’‡ ‘No,’ surely will be your reply; ‘*we will not!*’ Then, ‘to your tents,’ ye *unpaid, disinterested* labourers; and let *nothing hinder* you from being at your post at Camelford, on the 2d day of March next, and *then and there* prove to this ‘alien to our soil,’ that we are ‘the Lord’s free-men,’ and that such we will remain, despite of this *assumed modern* priestly domination.

“I am, your affectionate friend,

“Barn Park, Feb. 1835.

THOMAS P. ROSEVEAR.”

“To Mr. ———, Local Preacher, Camelford Circuit.”

* These expressions, respecting “resistance to the first attempt of a certain individual,” as they can refer to nothing else than my effort to bring Mr. R. to trial, are, from the pen of Mr. R. himself, exceedingly important; for, though unguarded, they amount to an acknowledgment that I gave him every chance allowed by our constitution.

† Had these sarcasms respecting my being a ‘stranger and an alien to the soil,’ been founded in fact, nothing could have been more ridiculous, in such a system as that of Wesleyan Methodism, than to bring them as a charge against me; but what will be thought upon the subject, when it is known that my father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were all natives of Cornwall—the two latter having first seen the light within a few yards of Camelford, and two of my children having been born in the town itself?

‡ The language respecting the “cutting off the top branch first,” was not originated by me; but was put into my mouth by Mr. Nathaniel Northey, Local Preacher, of Treligga, who informed me that “the top branch,” as he called Mr. Rosevear, “was beyond my reach,” and that I ought to employ myself “in first lopping off some of the lower branches.”

Soon after the publication of the above inflammatory document, to show that I was not disposed to do any thing *clandestinely*, I sent the following circular to the Boscastle Leaders and Stewards:—

“Camelford, February 16, 1835.

“My dear Brother—I think it right to inform you officially, as a Leader at Boscastle, that, on the 21st January, I wrote to inform Mr. Rosevear that I had to prefer against him several charges of violating the discipline of Methodism, and desired him to hold himself in readiness to stand a trial at a meeting of the Boscastle Leaders; but, through Mr. R.’s rejection of my proposal, I have been unable to accomplish my object.

“I am, yours affectionately,

“AQUILA BARBER.”

On the 23d February, according to a previous public announcement, I met, for the renewal of tickets, the class in which Mr. R.’s name stood enrolled, as a private member; my invariable plan being thus early to commence the quarterly visitation of classes, in consequence of the extremely scattered location of that extensive Circuit. I think this remark of some importance, as it has been published against me that I met that particular class a fortnight before the usual time, in order to deprive Mr. R. of his right to attend the subsequent Local Preachers’ Meeting. On meeting the class, I informed Mr. Thomas, the Leader, before all the members of that and Mr. Mead’s classes, that, as Mr. R. had refused to take his trial upon the charges sent, I could not think of leaving his ticket.

On the 2nd of March, our Quarterly Local Preachers’ Meeting took place; and, Mr. R. himself being present, I informed the brethren, (to quote the identical words adopted, and previously written down,) that, “in consequence of Mr. R.’s refusal to take his trial at a regular Leaders’ Meeting, I regard him as having virtually seceded from our Body; and, consequently, I have withheld his ticket. I distinctly state that he is not expelled; but that, having refused to be brought to trial according to law, he voluntarily retires from our Connexion, and thus ejects himself.” Against this decision, Mr. R. immediately and loudly protested; and the brethren declared it illegal to withhold a Local Preacher’s ticket without a trial at a Local Preachers’ Meeting. Though I was decidedly opposed to this sentiment, yet, in order to meet them on their own ground, I at length proposed to go into the case immediately with them, in the presence of Mr. R.; but neither would they assent to this arrangement, unless I would allow them to judge of the sentence to be inflicted, as well as of the proofs of the charges. To this, of course, I could by no means agree; not only because I regarded such a course as essentially opposed to the constitution of Methodism, but likewise, because I could see that the majority of the meeting, being partners in Mr. R.’s guilt, were determined to screen him from all punishment. Mr. R. then observed, that he had never refused to take his trial before a Leaders’ Meeting. Upon this—observing that all the Boscastle Leaders and Stewards were present, as Local Preachers—I immediately requested their particular attention, calling each by his name; and then I said, “Mr. Rosevear—

Here are all the Boscastle Leaders present; are you now willing to take your trial before them?" At this time, there were fifty Local Preachers and Exhorters in the room, besides my colleague, Mr. Averill, and myself. Some one then said to Mr. R.—"Don't answer that question." And then Mr. R. said—"Ah! this is a pretty way of serving me; after having blasted my character, you offer me a trial!" Finding, at length, that all my efforts to carry into execution our good and wholesome laws were fruitless, and only exposed me to the violent and sarcastic insults of most of the persons assembled, and especially of Mr. R., whose conduct was any thing but that of "*a Christian gentleman*," I dissolved the meeting, and retired.

The next day I went to Plymouth, for the purpose of seeing the Chairman, and requesting him immediately to summon a special District Meeting, in order to investigate the charges preferred against me by my persecutors—they having most insultingly rejected my repeated challenges at the Local Preachers' Meeting, to summon me, in the ordinary manner, before my brethren in the District. When I returned from Plymouth, I immediately sent notices around the Circuit to the most violent of the party, inviting their attendance—as well as that of any other accuser—at Camelford, on Wednesday, the 11th March, when, as I informed them, a special District Meeting would be held, for the purpose of scrutinizing my conduct and character. Not one, however, of my accusers thought proper to make his appearance; hence the case was, of course, gone into without them. The result was, that the meeting justified my conduct, and kindly sympathized with me in my trials. In order, then, to show that I was far from indulging any malignity toward Mr. R., and that I was willing to do all I consistently could to pacify his adherents, I proposed to the meeting, that, provided he would promise to cease only till the ensuing Conference from agitating the Connexion, he should be offered his ticket of membership as usual, as well as his restoration to the Preachers' plan. This proposition was, at length, adopted by the brethren, and, in due course, forwarded by the Secretary to Mr. R.; but it was rejected with disdain.

From this account, therefore, it will appear, that every thing that could be done, constitutionally, was done, to save both Mr. R. and his friends to the Wesleyan Connexion. Notwithstanding this, however, I have been pursued by the party with such relentless hostility, that, not satisfied with attempting to blacken both my official and my moral reputation, in almost every possible way, they went so far as at once to deprive me and my family, (a wife and six small children) of the whole of my stipend; they never having paid me a fraction of the amount which they themselves acknowledged was due to me, for the nine weeks' salary between the Christmas Quarterly Meeting and the 2nd of March, the day of the rupture; and, additionally, they having withheld from me even the contributions of the sound part of the Society, from the Christ-

mas to the Lady Day Quarterly Meeting—of which contributions they had most adroitly, but dishonorably, possessed themselves. Still, however, I sincerely pity these misguided men, and earnestly pray—"Lord, lay not these sins to their charge!"

AQUILA BARBER.

THE METHODIST NEW CONNEXION AND ITS SUCCESS.

It is a saying which demands universal consent, that "he is the best physician who performs the most cures." We would sanctify this proverb by giving it as our opinion, that the form of ecclesiastical polity which best contributes to the purity and extension of the kingdom of Christ, is the most excellent. Let the much calumniated Wesleyan system of church order be tried by this rule, with candor and impartiality, and the result of such an investigation will powerfully speak in its favor. We are well aware that a certain class of fierce democrats in the religious world, will boldly and indignantlly deny our statement. Attempts have been repeatedly made to demonstrate that the republican government of another Methodist community is better calculated than the polity established by Mr. Wesley to secure the multiplication of the Redeemer's people. Facts are said to corroborate this position. We have read in number 25 of the *Lantern*, the following boasting declaration, which is made by a New Connexion Minister—"that the New Methodists have increased during the last ten years—from 1825 to 1835—more than one-third; while the Wesleyans, during the same period, have increased about one-fifth." This assertion induces us to ask a few plain questions, to which we invite the attention of our readers.

Why is this comparison of the amount of good produced by the two systems confined to the last half-score years? As the New Connexion was formed in 1797, why did not the writer in the *Lantern* extend it to the last thirty-eight years? We can assign only one reason: he is a very prudent man, and he did not wish to ruin his cause. He well knew that if he went beyond his prescribed limits, the glory which he had thrown around his form of church government would, like Halley's comet, entirely disappear. The New Connexion in 1797, consisted of 5,000 members; and these have been augmented, as the *Lantern* states, to the number of 17,746. Does this thirty-eight years' prosperity so far exceed that of the Old Body for the same length of time, as to be "more than one-third to about one-fifth?" Let the subjoined facts answer this inquiry. The Wesleyan Methodists amounted at the period of Mr. Kilham's division to 110,159; a number which has so multiplied as to appear on the Minutes of 1835, to consist of 371,251! If we add to these, 15,106 Methodists in Upper Canada, who have connected themselves with the British Conference, by whose instrumentality they were remotely gathered out of the world, we shall have a grand total of 386,357!! The New Connexion, therefore, cannot, on the ground of utility, from the year of its commencement, claim any superiority over the Wesleyan community. We may inquire again—Why has the ratio of increase in the New Connexion during the last ten years been greater than in the Old one? It is asserted, that the former has increased from 10,837 to 17,746: while the latter Body has advanced from 283,057 to 386,357. This augmentation of Wesleyan Methodists since 1825, is *more than one-fourth*, and not merely about "one-fifth," as is stated in the *Lantern*. Notwithstanding this correction in our favour, we are willing to admit that the ratio of increase in the New Connexion is greater than in our community. We can, however, without much difficulty, account for it.

The Wesleyan Connexion has had during the last half-score years, an unusual number of secessions from its fellowship. Though there has been, in the mean time, a net increase to the Body of 103,300 souls; yet some have been expelled, and many

others have voluntarily withdrawn from the Connexion. Through the disturbances which originated at Leeds, in 1827—at Derby, in 1832—at Manchester, Gateshead, &c. in 1834, not less than three distinct communities of Methodists have been formed out of the Wesleyan Body. Some of these demanded a change of our doctrines, and others of them a subversion of our discipline; but as the Conference would not betray its trust, by allowing either a corruption of the theology, or a revolution of the polity of Methodism—though disguised under the imposing name of *reform*—the malecontents have been obliged to leave us, and to establish Societies of their own. These divisions have, of course, made a considerable deduction from our numerical prosperity.

While our Connexion has thus been the unhappy abode of strife and division, the New one has been, in a great measure, at peace. We are not aware it has had any secessions, except in the Dudley Circuit. The fact is, this Body has been too tranquil. Anti-methodistical Preachers have been received into its Ministry, and some of the laws of the Connexion have been despised and violated; and yet, there has not been heard any war against either heterodoxy or radicalism. Most *liberals* wish to do what is right in their own eyes; and some of them in this Body have their heart's desire. It is one of the fundamental laws of this Connexion, that meeting in class shall be *essential* to membership. It reads as follows:—

“Every person admitted into church fellowship with us, shall be *required* to meet regularly in class. Those who shall omit attending four times successively, without assigning a satisfactory reason, shall first be visited and admonished; and if they shall afterwards wilfully neglect for the same period, they shall then be *excluded* from our Societies.”

Notwithstanding this rule threatens the persons who despise class-meetings with expulsion from Society, yet individuals who never attend these means of grace are reckoned members in the New Connexion. One Circuit—the first on the Minutes—(and how many more Circuits we have not the means of knowing; but as there is one, it is evident there may be others)—IS WITHOUT CLASS-MEETINGS!! These prudential means of godly edification, together with those of a kindred nature, such as band-meetings and lovefeasts, have been swept away as nothing better than popish trumpery! We wish “a New Connexion Minister,” when he next writes in the *Lantern*, to answer this question:—How long has the New Methodist Society in Alnwick been without class-meetings; and, like an Independent church, made *sitting down* at the Lord's table the only test of membership? His reply will be deeply interesting to us, and also to the “Grand Central Association.”

We may also remark, that this Alnwick case really shows—what we verily believe—that *no part of Methodism is safe in the keeping of New Connexion polity*. Why were not these Alnwick Methodists—if such they may be styled—who refused to meet in class, expelled, according to the law of the Body?—The Preachers who have been sent there have not had power to enforce it, for they are only the passive agents of the people's will. The New system empowers the people to govern themselves; and if they choose to reject Methodist doctrines and discipline, how can a Ministry which is teaching, but *not ruling*, prevent them going “to the moles and to the bats?” The Conference, indeed, might have abandoned Alnwick for contemning and trampling upon one of its fundamental laws; but such a procedure was too much to expect from lay-delegation. We cherish a hope that the above statements will not be lost in their instruction and admonition to Wesleyan Methodists. We trust they will have the same effect upon their minds which they produce upon ours—that of binding them more cordially and firmly to Methodism as it *was*, and *is*, and *shall be*, “long as the sun and moon endure.”

Another reason which we must give why the ratio of increase has been rather greater in the New than in the Old Connexion for the last ten years is, that the former Body has been enriched with an unexampled accession of proselytes from other religious Societies. It is greatly to the praise of our community that its zeal and labours have been too heavenly and sacred to be proselyting. It commenced its hallowed career on the ground of self-condemnation and self-reform; and as it began so it has nobly continued to the present time. Hence, it has been, under God, pre-eminently successful in seeking and saving the lost.

But the New Connexion set out with finding fault with others, rather than with themselves; and in this censorious spirit the Body has, almost without intermission, conducted its operations. We cannot enumerate all the slanders which it has cast upon the Ministry of the parent Connexion; nor shall we now stop to specify all the plans which it has adopted to weaken and destroy the confidence and attachment of our people toward it, and thereby to draw some of them into its own communion.—When this Body, therefore, sends forth its pompous announcement of unequalled success, in the *Lantern*, or in any other publication, we must remember that its system is partly evangelizing and partly proselyting. Had the New Connexion not been fa-

vored with any increase from other churches during its progress, instead of having seventeen, we sincerely question whether it would have now contained *twelve* thousand members! During the last ten years, it has reaped a golden harvest of proselytes. Some of the old Circuits have grown rich at the expense of other people. Nearly *all* their new Circuits—such as Bilston, Boston, Dawley Green and Madely, Gateshead, Norwich, Truro, &c.—have been formed out of other sections of the church of God. Such being the plain and true state of things, we must tell the Minister of the New Connexion who has instituted a comparison to prove their prosperity superior to ours, for the last half-score years, that his comparative estimate is *dishonorable, unjust, and illiberal*!

This writer in the *Lantern* has placed, in juxta-position, systems which materially differ. He cannot be ignorant that the increase of his Body is not like that of our Connexion—the pure and grand result of turning ungodly men, by the zealous and faithful preaching of the word of reconciliation, “from darkness to light, and from the power of satan to God.” Moreover, he must be aware, that as it is more easy to spread disaffection among Christian people than to diffuse holiness among the lovers of unrighteousness, so it is much less difficult to turn saints into radicals than to change rebels into saints. Indeed, many facts of recent occurrence have furnished him with abundant proof to confirm the saying of the celebrated Hooker—“He that goeth about to tell people they are not so well governed as they might be, shall never want attentive hearers.” Such has been the unhallowed occupation of his Connexion, and it has, in consequence, enlarged its territory.

We are confident it will both amuse and interest our readers to be informed by this New Connexion Minister how it is that his denomination has exceeded, in point of usefulness, the religious society that was founded by the Rev. John Wesley. Let him speak for himself:

“The time when the Wesleyans increased with the greatest rapidity was a time when the people, particularly the working classes, were buried in ignorance; knowledge, not only on religious but on general subjects, was possessed by the few, whilst the mass of the people were covered with intellectual darkness: the most prosperous period of the New Connexion has been that which has been distinguished for the rapid and extensive diffusion of knowledge—a period during which the public mind has risen to a higher state of improvement and energy than it ever previously attained; yet, during this period, the ratio of increase in the Old Connexion has diminished, whilst ours has increased. The truth is, that priestly domination will prosper most extensively whilst surrounded with darkness—its best friend, its native element,” &c.

This declamatory paragraph assumes that the government of Wesleyan Methodism is incompatible with the diffusion of wholesome knowledge among the masses of the people. But this position is neither proved, *nor proveable*. So far are we from even suspecting that “darkness is the best friend” to the polity of our Body, that it is our earnest wish—and also the great desire of the Conference—to witness, and as much as in us lies, to promote, the extension of useful information among all classes of British society. It is ignorance, producing its natural fruits—such as pride, conceit, impatience of control, evil speaking, and reckless ambition—that most endanger its prosperity. We want our code of discipline to be generally known in its accordance with reason, and above all, in its agreement with the holy Scriptures. Its fundamental principles have been exhibited by the *Illuminator* as founded on the institutions, commandments, and precedents of the New Testament. An officer in the New Connexion, not long since, said to us—“Your Wesleyan government is unscriptural, and the Preachers know it.” We believe the man who uttered this reproachful charge was truly sincere. Nor was it his sentiment alone, for it had a cherished existence in the minds of many persons. Mob orators asserted that our Ministers could defend the system by “a dozen Methodistical arguments, but by none from the Scriptures.” Many loud and sneering calls were addressed to us to put off our shoes from off our feet, and to stand upon this holy ground. We have attended to the summons, and our adversaries know the manner in which we have occupied the sacred ground. Not only have we justified the pastoral rule of our vast community, but strong and mighty in our cause, we have carried the war into the camp of our enemies, and shown that the form of ecclesiastical order advocated by the “Grand Associationists,” and practised by the New Connexion, is *contrary* “to the law and to the testimony.” And how is it that our accusations and scriptural proofs have not been answered? Why has the promised performance of Mr. Allin on this subject been so long delayed? We much regret that this intended publication has not yet made its appearance.

We will now give our readers what we conceive to be the right interpretation of the passage we have extracted from the *Lantern*. The progress of the New Connexion very much depends on *the spirit of the world*. When the people of this country, “particularly the working classes,” are in an orderly and tranquil state, by the passion for revolutionary changes and mob rule being under the restraint of better principles, the

New Connexion makes only slow advancements; but when society is disturbed by an extensive spread of levelling politics, which so far infects religious people that they aspire to be "many masters," and are led to support, as "very respectable and Christian," a periodical which clamours for the destruction of the hereditary peerage—the separation of Church and State—the spoliation of ecclesiastical property, and other kindred demands; the New Methodists can boast of their multiplication! It was a worldly spirit which originated this community, at the close of the last century, when Mr. Kilham and his admirers imbibed the principles of the French revolution; and the powerful impulse that has recently revived it, has, in our deliberate judgment, proceeded, in a great measure, from the strongly-excited state of the political world!

Our beloved Connexion holds no sympathy with this restless, earthly, secularizing temper. It is too high and holy for its fellowship. Its object is to raise up a spiritual, peaceable, and useful people. And while it "walks by the same rule and minds the same thing," we have a most delightful assurance that God will be its defence. Infuriated democrats, glowing with revolutionary zeal, may cast some fire-brands into it, and hope for its destruction; but in vain; and when its history shall be written, it will be said, to the praise of its Divine Guardian, men "looked, and behold! the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed."

Correspondence.

WESLEYAN METHODIST REFORM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

SIR—I happen to reside in a part of the country where a good deal has been said about Dr. Warren and the "Wesleyan Methodist Association;" I have read in the newspapers their "Appeal to the British Public against the priestly and political Power of the Conference;" and I have seen, placarded in the streets, handbills headed "Wesleyan Methodist Reform," containing the most injurious imputations against the Preachers. This has induced me to examine the claims of the party making all this noise, and courting all this publicity, and having "weighed them in the balance," verily I have found them wanting.

I will not trespass on your time and patience by dilating on the negative demerits of these men, their evident want of Christian charity, and the utter absence in them of the spirit and temper of Jesus. Neither will I offer any comment on their "great swelling words of vanity; since, by dropping their former distinctive appellation, they appear to have felt the unsuitableness and ridicule of their former *grand-eloquence*! I shall, therefore, confine my remarks at present to their objects, the means by which they seek to promote them, and the striking contrast between the liberality of their profession and the intolerance of their practice.

Their immediate object evidently is to lower and degrade the Ministerial character and office; and to effect this object they have recourse to the basest calumnies against the Conference as a body, and against individual Preachers by name; some of the best and worthiest of whom have, from week to week, had "all manner of evil spoken of them falsely," for the last three years. But the frequency and enormity of the falsehoods propagated have long since produced an effect the opposite of that intended by their authors. The persons who were to have been the victims have escaped, while infamy has recoiled on the heads of the calumniators.*

Another object of these "Reformers of Methodism" is, to set themselves up as "Lords over God's heritage;" and to the accomplishment of this object the degradation of the Preachers is designed as a step. The disappointment of the agitators, in the

* The public, it must be acknowledged, has a tolerably strong appetite for scandal; but the quantity provided by the *Advocate* was an *over-dose*, which has produced *nausea*, with its usual results. The agitators, therefore, in imitation of their Popish model, have been endeavouring to establish a "rent" for its support. But, like the emperor who set fire to Rome, and laid the blame on the Christians, the *Advocate* may say to its tardy friends—"It is too late. Is this fidelity?" Already, according to the statement of its conductors—(see "Appeal of the *Christian Advocate*" *begging fund*; *Advocate*, Nov. 23)—it has "become to all *legal* intents and purposes, totally defunct;" yet, like a *galvanized felon*, it has been "resuscitated" by "the semblance of a miracle" and (for certain *illegal* purposes, I presume) remains alive, for the present. The next time that it shall undergo *suspension*, something more, I trow, than "the semblance of a miracle" will be necessary to bring it back to life.

rejection of their scheme of lay-delegacy by the Preachers and the people,† like that of their collegiate champion, Dr. Warren, is personal; for who but themselves, if their scheme had been adopted, should be lay-delegates, and rule the Connexion? Whether they have shown themselves to be intellectually, morally, or religiously qualified, is another question, and one respecting which their own opinion, probably, differs from that of most other people. To observe the workings of their vanity, and the puffing and swelling of their ambition, forcibly reminds us of the frog in the fable. In the Sheffield meeting of Delegates, the Wesleyan Connexion was addressed by them much in the style of a king's speech, as far as the difference of circumstances would admit, and "Brethren"—"Preachers of Conference"—"Christian Brethren," introduce the separate members of this officious document, as substitutes for "Gentlemen"—"My Lords and Gentlemen"—"Gentlemen of the House of Commons." In the report of the "debates" we are told, that "at three o'clock the Meeting resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House." At another stage of the proceedings—"The Committee then rose, and the House resumed." On Thursday morning—"Mr. Matthews presented the report of the *Finance Committee*,"—"Mr. Redstone trusted that all present would be faithful to their constituents." But, as if conscious of the necessity of an effort to escape the insignificance which they felt awaited them, Dr. Turton said—"The Delegates were now called upon to maintain *their dignity*." Thus, day after day, did these self-chosen and self-appointed Delegates strive to impress the public mind with a sense of their importance, and to convince the world how well qualified they were to sustain the character and exercise the functions of LEGISLATORS!*

The "Wesleyan reformers" have a further end in view—an ulterior object. Their views are not limited to any changes which may be effected in the Connexion, nor to any *merely religious* (!) design. They extend to matters of *state*; and, as they do not find Methodism a fit instrument for the accomplishment of their political designs, they wish to make it so. "Other questions and other interests," says a correspondent of the *Advocate* (Jan. 25), "are involved in this great struggle than those affecting the Wesleyan Methodists."—"The separation of Church and State," says the *Advocate*, "will never take place till the Wesleyan Conference is *revolutionized*."† ("We thank

+ At the Sheffield Meeting of Delegates, in August last, Mr. Hughes said—"Though the members of the Association were numerous, they were *not the majority*." Mr. Farrar, of Liverpool, contended, that even if Conference were disposed to grant lay-delegation, the Connexion was not in a condition to receive it. There was scarcely one-third of the people for it." Dr. Warren contended, that "the people out of doors were almost unanimous." The other contradictions in the speeches of these *sapientissimi* were equally amusing:—Mr. Sigston "objected to the word agitation." "Mr. Redstone contended for the use of the word agitation." Mr. Cruickshanks "wished to *get done* with agitation." Mr. Matthews said—"Those who at their baptism made a vow to renounce the devil and all his works, did, in effect, pledge themselves to become agitators to the end of their lives." Mr. Cruickshanks, speaking of the Preachers, said—"They had stolen the rights of the people, and the people wanted their stolen rights back again." "Mr. Redstone was convinced that the persons whom the majority of the delegates represented, would not be satisfied with any thing short of lay-delegation." Mr. C. Parker "contended.... that they had no moral right to ask for lay-delegation.... because lay-delegates were never in the Conference. The Conference had not, in that respect, deprived him of any right; he could not ask for lay-delegation as the restoration of a privilege, because, when he entered the Society there was no such thing in existence." "*Mr. Parker was called to order*." "The *Gloria Patri* was then sung, as an expression of gratitude for their unanimity!"—(Extracted from the report of the adjourned meeting of delegates, in Sheffield: *Advocate*, Aug. 10.) Truly, their unanimity was not wonderful, especially when we consider the means employed to secure it. Witness the following ORDERS:—"With regard to the principle of lay-delegation, we confidently anticipate entire unanimity; and shall be much disappointed if any individual—much more if any one who was present at the Manchester meeting—should offer it, *directly or indirectly*, the slightest opposition; and ill as any one can be spared.... we had rather any member of the small minority who formerly dissented.... staid at home, than that he should consume valuable time, engender unavailing strife, or *expose himself to injurious suspicions*, by any attempt to hinder the brethren," &c. Bravo! This is liberty! After this, no wonder Mr. Parker was called to order. The only wonder is, that a man who (judging from his speech) possesses some common sense, happened to be found in such company.—The following is a sample of the manner in which the same august assembly were able to blow hot and cold with the same breath, just as it suited their immediate purpose. In their "Appeal to the members of the Societies throughout the kingdom"—(see *Christian Advocate*, Aug. 24.)—the prudence and piety which characterised the Conferences of 1795 and 1797, are contrasted with the want of those qualities in "the present race of Preachers." But in the *debates* which preceded or accompanied the adoption of this appeal, Mr. Sigston "feared the Conference were trifling with them, and that the old *Satanic* plan of 1797 was being played over again." Mr. Gordon said—"In 1797 the Conference sent forth its *falsities* before the truth could be circulated." The prudence of these delegates, in publishing both appeal and debates, may be questioned, to say nothing of the piety exhibited in these charges against the *fathers* of the Connexion, many of whom had been so long in *their graves*!

* "Who authorised them to go to Sheffield in an official character? Whom do they represent?—None but *their concealed selves*."—*Advocate*, July 27.

† After all the hollow and hypocritical pretences of the *Christian Advocate* party, about reforming Methodism to *low Independency*, they now avowedly give their adhesion. "We have no particular affection," they tell us, "for Conferences or Congregational Unions. It would not break our hearts if every such assembly were *broken up*."—*Advocate*, Jan. 25. To this, as we always said *would be* the case, it is come at last!

thee, Jew, for teaching us *that word!*")—"We consider Methodism *as it is*, as the great obstacle to the triumph of religious liberty in this country," says the same authority.—Yes, of such religious liberty as prevailed in France amidst the horrors of revolution, and under the "reign of terror."—"A REVOLUTION," says the mild and meek Mr. Lamb, "in an ancient kingdom has been effected in three days, and *why not in Methodism?*"—*Lecture delivered in the chapel of the REFUGEES (!), Bolton—(Advocate, Oct. 26.)* If, indeed, Wesleyan Methodism has, in any degree, tended (like the salt of the earth) to prevent the occurrence, in our own country, of such scenes as France has witnessed during the last forty-five years, its national importance must entitle it to the approval and veneration of the wise and good; nor can its "conservative" influence excite the hatred or anger of any but the desperate or the deluded.

But justice will not be done to the "Reform Methodists," unless we compare the liberality of their professions with the intolerance of their practice. Their intolerance has been carried to a higher pitch than it could have been imagined possible for Protestants, in the nineteenth century, to be guilty of. Thus, for example, *illegal violence* has been used to exclude Wesleyan Preachers, itinerant and local, from those chapels which are legally secured to the Connexion, and to which they have been regularly appointed. In other instances similar violence has been employed to interrupt them in their ministrations. In a letter, dated Camelford, Nov. 3, 1835, and inserted in the *Christian Advocate* of Nov. 9, this is made a matter of boasting and exultation. One of the Preachers now labouring in that Circuit, with a respectable friend who accompanied him, are denounced as "burglars and rioters," for having, in the best manner they could, entered a chapel which had been illegally shut against them, and the key of it *mis-laid*. The letter goes on to say, that the Preacher had "no sooner commenced the service, than the crowd collected commenced shouting, the children taking the lead, so that it was like the confusion of tongues at Babel." The children had been purposely dismissed from the Sunday School by their *teachers (!)* as soon as it was known that the Preacher had entered the town! In the Meeting of Delegates at Sheffield, Mr. Stephens, of Camelford, said, that they had the use of all the chapels in that Circuit, with the exception of one. When the Superintendent went to preach in the chapels, the *key* was generally *missing*,* so that he had to return as he came." And this bare-faced avowal was listened to without disapprobation by the "collective wisdom" and honesty of the *would-be Pastorate!*

The intolerance of the "reform Methodists" has been further evinced by certain appeals which have recently been made to the *higher* and the *lower* powers. I do not now refer to the law-suits which Dr. Warren, at the expense of his followers, has carried on in the Court of Chancery,

"With other promises and other vaunts,"

Than the event has served to justify. Defeated in their appeals to the courts of law; defeated, too, in their appeal to the Wesleyan Methodist Societies, these liberal and reforming Methodists invoke the *executive government* to "stretch out its arm, and vex" their former pastors and brethren.—They call on the *legislature* for persecuting enactments against the *system* of Methodism; and, at the same time, they endeavour to stir up *mobs* to pull down Wesleyan chapels. "Is the public aware," says their weekly organ (the *Advocate*), "that a map of England and Wales has long since been published with reference to the different Circuits, Societies, &c.? The emblem is the Indian banyan—each branch becoming of itself another root, till the whole land is covered with the deadly shade of this spiritual *Upas!* We commend the study of the acts of the hundred apostles of this system to the special notice of the present government.... We would put the government on their guard."—*Advocate*, Nov. 16. "The day is not far distant when... they will be asking the occupants of Downing-street what they think of the matter? Let Lord Melbourne anticipate the inquiry. He will find the Conference, at least, as worthy his attention as the Orange Lodges, and as much entitled to his gratitude."—*Advocate*, Nov. 30. "Either Methodism as it is, puts down the government, or the State, in self-defence, must *crush it*."—*Advocate*, Nov. 16. Thus, as in the apostles' days, "the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected towards the brethren;" and as "a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a

* "The keys, indeed! the keys, the power of the keys!" exclaims the *Christian Advocate*, Nov. 23. The writer knows a chapel, from which the clock was stolen about twelve months since. There were two sets of keys belonging to the chapel, one of which happened to be in the possession of a person at whose house the Reform Methodists held their meetings. No wonder the (hired, if not bribed) *Advocate* is so anxious that "the power of the keys" should be transferred to the members of the Association. But methinks it was hardly prudent in him to make such an *outray* about them, except on the same "principle" that persons of a certain description are said to cry out "*Stop thief!*"

Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus, withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith;" so these men seek to stir up the higher powers against Methodism, representing it as "a mighty and most mischievous institution." In the late appeal of the self-styled "Wesleyan Methodist Association" to the British public, they not only call on the metropolitan and provincial press, and all parties of politicians, to join in a crusade against the system of Wesleyan Methodism, but they invoke the court of "supreme legislation" to unite with them in the same object; or, as they profanely express it, to "come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty!" In the report given in the *Advocate*, Nov. 9, of a meeting of Reform Methodists, in Mr. Alexander Fletcher's chapel, London, a Mr. Eckett, who was the principal speaker, said—"The meeting of Conference with closed doors* was no longer to be endured. The attention of government should be brought to bear on the subject."—"The Government was putting down Orange Lodges, and Conference Associations must also be broken up."† In the same paper, the letter of the Camelford correspondent already quoted concludes with the following significant *hint*—intended, obviously, to operate in a lower sphere—"I fear, if the Conference can overrule the Trustees and take the chapels, *not one stone will be left upon another!*"‡

And these are the *liberal* people! These are the parties who complain that Methodism *as it is*, is the great obstacle to religious liberty! What would Methodism be, *as they wish to make it?* These are the proceedings, the wishes, and the spirit of those who call themselves "Reform Methodists!" And if such is their disposition, now that they are powerless and comparatively unimportant, what would be their conduct if they could wield the powers of church and state? If thus they bluster and bellow from the dust and the dunghill, how would they thunder from the high places of the earth? If under a tolerant, a Protestant dynasty, they sigh for a Court of High Commission, or English Inquisition, what would be their "tender mercies" if the change of times should afford them a government to their mind—Papal, Sectarian, or Infidel? I leave these questions with all reflecting persons to answer, and remain, yours, &c.

A WESLEYAN METHODIST.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

SIR—In the Southampton Circuit, like many others where faction and falsehood have exerted their baneful influence, the Missionary cause, instead of suffering loss, has prospered far beyond the most sanguine expectations of its managers and supporters; proving, to their complete satisfaction, that the cause they maintain is under the control of Him "who sitteth in the heavens," and "laugheth to scorn the raging of its enemies."

That the attempts of the faction have succeeded in "*stopping the supplies*," so far as they proceeded from certain individuals who were ready to halt, and from others who, for want of better information, withheld what they were once in the habit of giving with delight, is too true; but that increased contributions, to a far greater amount, have been made in other parts of the Circuit, is equally true; and the present favourable circumstances of this Branch Society, and its future prospects, call for the warmest expressions of thankfulness to Almighty God.

The amount raised in this Circuit, in the year 1834, was £66 2s 1d. Of this sum, Winchester supplied £22 0s 9d. In the past year, the few at Winchester, who

* If the doors of Conference are to be open to the public, why not those of Financial, District, Quarterly, Leaders', and Class Meetings, Lovefeasts, &c.? This would be but carrying out the principle. I hardly expected, indeed, to find our reforming censors so soon avowing their wish to have these latter thrown open. Yet so it is! At the Sheffield meeting of delegates—"A resolution was proposed, recommending the Conference to have its sittings, as well as those of the District Meetings, *open to the public*." "Mr. Rowland supported the resolution... Had the meetings of *leaders*, &c. been less secret during the last nine months the work of *Methodist reform* would have been greatly facilitated." Thus the hedge is to be broken down, and the Church, instead of being, like the spouse in the Canticles, a garden enclosed, is to be *open to all comers*, like a fountain in the desert trodden by wild beasts, "where (as Dr. Jeremy Taylor saith) a panther and a lioness descend to drink and lust."

† This is certainly more in the spirit of Dr. Eccius, than in that of Luther or the Reformation.

‡ As the labours of Wickliffe in England had to sustain some share of obloquy, on account of the rebellion headed by Wat Tyler and Jack Straw, which some attributed to his writings—and as the Reformation in Germany was disgraced by the fanaticism of John of Leyden, and the rebellion of the boors—so are the violences of Radicalism and of the "Wesleyan Methodist Reformers," likely to bring a reproach on Methodism, in the estimation of those who will not give themselves the trouble to distinguish between the general tendency of a system, and the excesses of those who seek to identify themselves with it. But I have no fear that any large portion of the British public will confound the principles and practices of the *real* with those of the *pretended* followers of Wesley.

remain faithful to the interest of Missions, have contributed £4 4s 0½d: the rest of the Circuit, £75 15s 11½d—making a total of £80.

One of the most striking incidents connected with the Missionary operations during the past year is, that in a village, the inhabitants of which had been assailed in the markets, at the corners of the streets, and in which no means had been left untried calculated to prejudice the minds of the people against Wesleyan Methodism and the Missionary cause, the weekly contributions are increased, and there is an advance on the public collection of 50 per cent.

It may also be added, that since the secession, which is now more than twelve months ago, the Circuit has enjoyed greater peace and harmony than had fallen to its lot for many previous years, and that the number of new members will, it is believed, soon compensate for the 100 which then ceased to form a part of it.

To Almighty God, who has thus "made the wrath of man to praise him, and who restrains the remainder of wrath," be all the glory.—Yours, &c.

J. EVERITT,

Treasurer of the Southampton Branch Missionary Society.

THE AGITATORS IN THE STOCKTON CIRCUIT.

In consequence of the expulsion of Mr. Emmett, from the Wesleyan body, by the vote of the last Conference, four dissatisfied Local Preachers and one Leader sent in their resignations, and united themselves with Mr. Emmett into a separate body. They have hired a small school-room in Stockton for preaching; and Mr. Emmett has opened his corn warehouse, in Yarm, for the same purpose. In the whole Circuit about fifty persons have left the Wesleyan Society, and joined them. Since that period great peace, unanimity, and considerable indications of prosperity, have been witnessed in this Circuit. Notwithstanding the insidious attempts to injure the contributions to the Missionary subscriptions, we found, on closing the accounts for the past year, the amount raised was £303, being several pounds more than the previous year.

As the separatists did not create all the sensation in this neighbourhood which they expected—nay, finding they were hardly missed, and all matters were going on prosperously in the Old body—they were evidently much disappointed, and therefore calculated much upon the result of a visit from Dr. Warren, and his fellow agitators, to advocate the cause of pretended Methodist reform. Their wishes have been realized, and I transmit for your information the particulars:—On Sunday evening, January 10th, Dr. Warren, according to announcement by large placards, preached at Yarm, in a large building specially fitted up for the occasion. The congregation is said to have exceeded one thousand persons. That they were chiefly influenced by curiosity, was evident by the kind of sympathy they felt for the Doctor and his cause; for, notwithstanding his fervent appeals to their liberality for the *needful* to defray the expenses of the Chancery suit, the collection was only three pounds and a few shillings. On the Wednesday following—namely, the 13th instant—a meeting was held in the shabby old Playhouse of Stockton, where a numerous audience, chiefly consisting of the lower order, assembled. The principal performers at the Playhouse were Dr. Warren, Mr. David Rowland, Mr. Emmett, and Mr. Graham. They dwelt largely on the usual topics of invective, abuse, and slander. The violence of their manner—the wickedness of their wilful misrepresentations—the total want of every thing in the nature of evidence or argument to substantiate their statements—were sad manifestations of the reckless and desperate cause in which they are engaged. They reminded us of those striking words of St. Jude:—"These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts, and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration, because of advantage." They described the Ministers of the Wesleyan body as a set of usurpers and tyrants—sleepy watchmen nodding over their charge—men who substituted the love of power for the love of souls—the insolence of office for the gentleness and meekness of Christ—men whose piety and simplicity crouched to worldliness and wealth—robbing Christians of the rights with which God and reason have invested them—inflicting deep and lasting injury on God's people. Such was the language in which these itinerant agitators abounded; indeed, the bitterness of their spirit could only be exceeded by the violence of their abuse. Many persons, not religious, left the meeting before its close, under excited feelings of the deepest disgust at what they heard and witnessed; many others, who, from common report, thought Dr. Warren and Mr. Emmett had been severely dealt with by the Conference, were fully convinced of the propriety of such a step, and that no well-ordered society could hold intercourse with such men.

Perhaps, a stronger proof could not well have been given of the genreal odium attached to such proceedings, than the manner in which the announcement of the collection was received. A general movement took place—the collectors were laughed at—and the sum collected, out of which the hiring of the house, lighting it up, door keepers and posting-bills, were to be paid, was only about three pounds. Two meetings of a similar description, were held in Yarm, where much the same kind of impressions were produced—nearly all persons of credit, religion, and decency being disgusted with such irreligious proceedings. By the unanimous request of the Leaders' Meeting, addresses were delivered by the Rev. T. Harris and the Rev. J. C. Pengelley, in the Wesleyan chapel, Stockton, on Monday evening, January 18th, to refute the slanders of Dr. W. and his party; and although a mere announcement of such addresses was given on the Sabbath-day, the chapel was crowded above and below. The Rev. T. Harris confined his observations chiefly to the facts connected with the present agitation in the Wesleyan body—proved, by reading various documents, that Dr. W., by his reckless and obstinate conduct, was the chief cause of all the agitation and divisions which have taken place. The reading of the Rev. James Wood's letter to Dr. Warren, produced a deep impression on the audience. The real principles and designs of the Association were examined and exposed, particularly their blundering attempts to legislate for the government of the Societies, and the unhallowed manner in which they sought to substitute force for argument—violent threats instead of reason and Scripture—and the cry of "stop the supplies!—starve them out!" as the watchword of their revolutionary projects.

The Rev. J. C. Pengelley entered largely into the examination of the spirit and reckless conduct of the agitators—proved its utter variance with the principles and spirit of the New Testament, and the little credit due to wholesale dealers in defamation, and the salaried agents of an Association whose object is to disturb, divide, and destroy. He clearly exposed the sophistry of their reasonings, and the fallacy of their arguments—described the perilous consequences of following such guides—and pointed out the sound scriptural principles, excellent economy, and admirable discipline, of Wesleyan Methodism. On the whole, little is to be feared from these agitators, if they proceed in their evil work in the same spirit as in this neighbourhood. Nearly all ranks of people unite in disapprobation of such unrighteous proceedings, in the attempt of men itinerating for the purpose of disturbing and dividing peaceable and prosperous Societies. How little do they partake of that wisdom which is from above—which first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. May the Lord change their hearts, and give them better work.

There is nothing new under the sun. Complaints about tyranny, and professions of uncommon regard for the poor, have been connected with "ineffable hypocrisy," from the beginning. We know who complained about tyranny, even in Paradise, and persuaded our first parents that the laws of their Maker, like the Minutes of Conference, were founded in a jealousy of the rising rights and liberties of mankind, and instead of tending to elevate and bless, were *meant* to perpetuate degradation and slavery.—"And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die, for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."—Gen. iii. 4, 5. Yet this zeal against tyranny was only the "ineffable hypocrisy" of "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan who deceiveth the whole world."—Rev. xii. 9. But the Preachers are charged with crouching "to worldliness and wealth;" and, of course, it is meant to be inferred, that the agitators are the special friends of the poor. So Judas wished to be thought when he said—"Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" Yet this fine speech was nothing better than "ineffable hypocrisy;" for "this he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag." There were three *real* reasons for the complaints made about the "tyranny" of the Conference, at the above meeting. 1. The Conference had not made Dr. Warren a great man—a thing which it was utterly out of their power to do. 2. They have not made D. Rowland a Travelling Preacher—a thing which he very much wished to be, but his Quarterly Meeting did not recommend him as a proper person. 3. They had some thoughts of putting Mr. Graham on his trial—a compliment to which, in the judgment of some persons, he had fairly entitled himself. Other reasons would, doubtless, be assigned by the orators themselves; but the Stockton people, after hearing the speeches, began, like brother Jonathan over the water, to "guess" that all was not right, and therefore "laughed at the collectors." Every bubble bursts at last, and so will this.

TITUS.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Either the funds or the credit of the "Grand Centrals," or both, are showing symptoms of deep decline. The neatly-printed *Lantern* has gone out—we suppose, for want of "oil;"—and in its place, there has come out a filthy-looking little handbill, about four inches square, as dirty in its language as it is in its appearance, and which is sedulously thrust into the hands of our peaceably-disposed people as they come into our chapels, by the agents of the Association, who take care to choose the *darkest nights* for the purpose, as the most suitable for the deed. We have heard, indeed, from pretty good authority, that on casting up the debits and credits of the "Grand" concern, their class and ticket monies, and other subscriptions, fall short of meeting the charges for printing, travelling, and *et ceteras*, to the tune of twelve hundred pounds! It is but justice to add that it is also said, that this serious deficiency is subscribed for. The former part of the statement we dare say is true enough; about the latter we have our doubts.

We had noticed the article in the *Advocate*, headed "Methodist reform triumphant in Edinburgh." The party who have left our Society there have had a public meeting, and been singing,

"Sound the loud timbrels o'er Egypt's dark sea,
Jehovah hath triumphed, his people are free;"

and we are right glad to hear it: for it is well known to the members of the Chapel Loan Fund that these very men have long been so dreadfully oppressed with the spirit of pauperism, that their bondage was completed some time ago. However, they now sing, "for the pride of the tyrant is broken," and are resolved never more to be entangled in the yoke of bondage, and say, "Scotchmen never will be slaves." They might as well have made a virtue of necessity, and added, "never will be paupers;" for although these emancipated Stewards had the conscience, last year, to take out of the Contingent Fund upwards of £100 more than they put into it, they are not likely to play the same game again. We do not mean to say that this modern *exodus* is a proof of perfect soundness of mind.

We beg leave to inform the friend who wishes for information about D. Rowland, that it has been his policy, for some time, to exhibit his wife as beggars do their children—to excite compassion, and to gull the public. It is true, as he told the good people in the North, that he bears some "blushing honors thick upon him." It is true, as he said—1. That he "fills two public situations in Liverpool;" that is, he is a clerk, or collector, acting under the committees of two public bodies. We believe he does quite as well as a servant, as he did when a master, and even better. He once managed a small concern of his own, and now very much wishes to manage Methodism in the same way; but, we think, few of its friends would like to see it brought to a similar conclusion. It is true—2. That he was placarded (*by his own friends*) all over the town, as an expelled Methodist. This, he says, was a very great honor; which is a clear proof that some men can turn *brass* into gold." It is true, as he told the meeting—3. That he walked the streets of Liverpool without molestation. This his conscience told him was a very wonderful thing. As to the other "*honour*" which his modesty allows him to mention, we really cannot say whether it is true or not that he was—4. complimented by a banker, for the "firm stand" he had made for religious liberty. All we know is, that the "firm stand" was of the Falstaff kind; and consisted (1.) in running away from his ecclesiastical opponent at Leeds-street; and (2.) discreetly resolving, that no consideration on earth should lead him to come up to the scratch again at Sheffield.

Our Glasgow correspondent has our best thanks; we only regret that a press of other matter prevents our giving an extended notice of his communication. But we heartily congratulate the Glasgow Preachers, and the Society there, on the signal failure of the "*venerated*" Doctor Warren and his degraded crew, in their late attempt to scatter and destroy a peaceful, united community—hesitating not to employ the unworthiest and most ungenerous means, and practising the grossest impositions (on Dr. Wardlaw for instance) in order to obtain what might appear to bystanders to be, at least, a tacit approval of their proceedings. But this wanton attack has recoiled on the heads of its promoters in their own indelible disgrace, and it has served to unite the Glasgow friends in closer bonds of union. Exertions are now making in behalf of the interest of the chapels there, which are likely to issue in the happiest results.

Several very valuable communications have been received, during the month, from Darlington, Stockton, Yarm, Southampton, Manchester, London, and Camelford.

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THE
ILLUMINATOR;

DESIGNED

TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF THE WESLEYAN CONSTITUTION ;
TO VINDICATE THE CHARACTER OF ITS AUTHORITIES ; TO GUARD
THE MEMBERS AGAINST THE ATTEMPTS MADE TO SEDUCE THEM
FROM THE SOCIETY ; AND EXPOSE THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTS OF
THE SO CALLED "GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION."

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THE ROCHDALE PROCEEDINGS.

In page 293 of this publication, we thought it our duty to expose, in as brief a manner as our limits allowed, the gross hypocrisy and reckless proceedings of certain individuals closely allied to the Grand Central Association in Rochdale. That the observations we made, and the conclusions at which we arrived, excited the tumultuous ire of the reformers of Methodism in that place we fully expected; and the result of the whole has positively confirmed us in the opinions which we then gave, and to which we must refer our readers.

The appointment of the Rev. John Sumner, the Rev. John M'Owan, and the Rev. Samuel Allen, by the last Conference, to labour in the word and doctrine in the Rochdale Circuit, was hailed, by many, as one of the most felicitous which took place. Their amiable spirit—their uniform Christian deportment—their unsullied honor—their laborious services, and their universal kindness and courtesy, appeared amply to qualify them for extensive usefulness in a Circuit where the seeds of discontent and dissension had been scattered with liberal hands, by certain characters whose names are but too well known as intimately associated with unfaithfulness, hypocrisy, slander, and lies. Depending on the assistance of divine grace, and on the presence of the great Head of the Church, these devout and zealous Ministers entered on the duties of the Circuit; fully expecting, from what they had heard and what they then saw, to combat with difficulties of no common or ordinary kind.

From the testimony of several persons who mingled in the controversy, and of others who stood aloof, we are informed that the entrance of Mr. Sumner and his colleagues upon the scene of their future labours, was of the most peaceful and conciliatory character; they evidently purposed doing all the good in their power; they commingled with the people of all classes in the most pastoral and affectionate manner—their conversation was such as became the gospel of Christ and themselves, His Ministers; the unruly were kindly exhorted; and at the quarterly visitation of the classes, which commenced shortly after the arrival of the

Preachers on the Circuit, tickets were not withheld from any of the members on the ground of disaffection toward the Wesleyan Body; in fact, the inquiry was not instituted, whether or not they belonged to the Association. Nevertheless, while these excellent men were pursuing a plan so gentle and forbearing, they were cruelly and maliciously assailed by a few—in whose bosoms all noble and disinterested feelings were destroyed—who told them, in the hearing of many who were receiving at their hands the word of life, that as Methodist Preachers they durst not do their duty; for if they were to act as the laws of Methodism required, they must exclude hundreds from all association with the church of God. How true the saying—"A guilty conscience needs no accuser!"

It is much to be regretted that the forbearance manifested by Mr. Sumner and his colleagues produced no permanent good effect. Plans of agitation, varied indeed in their mode of operation, but all intended to be subversive of Wesleyan Methodism, were deeply laid, and carried into effect with a zeal and determination worthy of a better cause; so that before Mr. Sumner had been in the Circuit three days, one of the ring-leaders in those disgraceful transactions which subsequently took place, said to him, when in company with a colleague—"Reform meetings will be held in this Circuit, and I believe, in the chapels too; and there is no more prospect of peace being established than there is of the gospel being preached to Beelzebub!" It ought to be known that the author of this speech, which partook so much of the spirit of the infernal regions, was a Heywood-man.

When the excellent Superintendent of the Rochdale Circuit discovered the *animus* of those people with whom he had to deal, he, in conjunction with his colleagues, very judiciously set himself to counteract, as much as possible, the injurious consequences of those arrows, firebrands, and death, which the disaffected were so industriously spreading around them. He fearlessly, and in the strictest accordance with truth, declared that the Conference had never violated its own engagements or laws, affecting the rights and liberties of the people, either in reference to the admission or expulsion of members, proof of which he was able to adduce from documents of very authentic and indisputable character; but of what use are authorities of the most respectable kind, when brought to bear upon men who have recklessly determined to throw *all* authority to the owls and the bats, and especially *such* men as those whom we shall shortly exhibit before our readers; men, with whom division in the Societies, of the most devastating order, was the object in view? The under-current of agitation was flowing with the swelling rapidity of a mountain torrent; of this Mr. Sumner was aware, and consequently prepared for its emerge, with all human prudence and foresight. Prior to his arrival on the Circuit, but subsequently to the termination of the sittings of the Conference, a meeting had been held in Rochdale, at which certain obnoxious resolutions were adopted, but which were not made public until Mr. Sumner assumed the pastoral office in that place; then they were printed, and industriously circulated among the classes by their respective unfaithful Leaders. This meeting appears to have been the first public act of aggression toward the Conference, from the abettors and supporters of the Grand Central, in Rochdale. It was held on August 19, 1835, ostensibly for the purpose of receiving a report of the proceedings of a deputation, which was appointed on the 15th of the preceding month, to present an address to the Conference, and of considering what further measures

should be adopted. We insert the result of this meeting, embracing a string of seven resolutions, all of which are subversive of the constitution of Methodism, and highly calculated to injure the cause of vital godliness wherever their withering influence is directed. The addresses of the persons who took an active part in the proceedings of that meeting were distinguished by that vulgar and vituperative conduct by which our modern Wesleyan reformers have rendered themselves notorious, and are utterly unworthy of notice. The resolutions are as follow:—

"1. That this meeting hears with surprise and sorrow, that Conference will not grant what we conceive to be the just and reasonable demands of the people.

"2. That though the result of our application to Conference is highly unsatisfactory, yet we do not despair of obtaining a reform in Wesleyan Methodism, based on the Scriptural principle, *'that the express concurrence of the people is necessary in all important matters—such as legislation, finance, and the administration of discipline.'* We therefore pledge ourselves to persevere in the use of all Christian-like means for the attainment of such reform.

"3. That should an attempt be made in this Circuit (which has been in others) illegally to expel any from Society who take an active part in Wesleyan reform, we now record our firm determination neither to submit to, nor acknowledge, any expulsion which is not in accordance with the following good old Methodist rule:—*'No Leader or Steward can be put out of his place but by a majority of Leaders, or a Quarterly Meeting. Nor can any member of the Society be excluded but by a majority at a Leaders' Meeting.'*

"4. That this is, and was intended to be, a fundamental and unalterable rule of Methodism, is most certain; and for these reasons: (1.) It is in perfect harmony with the spirit of the regulations of 1797, at which Conference the Methodist constitution was, in its leading principles, settled on a permanent foundation. (2.) The Conference of 1797, after *concisely* stating to the people the *sense* of what had been agreed upon, promise that the rules shall be published for the benefit of the members, when they will have the whole at large. And in accordance with this promise, the rules were so published by the Conference agent, G. Story, in 1798; of which rules, the one we have quoted is a most important one, as it respects discipline. (3.) This edition of rules having been all distributed throughout the Connexion, a second was published, in 1800, by the said G. Story, who was still the Conference agent; and in this second edition this same important rule is found, and the whole of these rules were sold or given by the Travelling Preachers, as the acknowledged and settled rules of the Connexion. This shows, beyond dispute, *what was, and therefore still is*, the rule respecting expulsions, as finally agreed upon by the Preachers and people in 1797.

"5. That many of us having accepted office, and become responsible for large sums of money, in the full belief that this was an essential and unchangeable rule of Methodism, and such being still our conviction, we shall be *traitors* to ourselves—to our office—to the cause of God—and to posterity, if we were to suffer it to be violated. It will, therefore, be with us a matter of conscience (and being so, we will never swerve) to resist to the utmost any one who dares to break or evade this good old rule of genuine Methodism.*

"6. That should any member be illegally expelled in this Circuit whose moral character is unimpeached, we hereby assure such person that we will feel towards him, and in every respect treat him as a brother beloved. And should the whole, or the major part of us, be so expelled, we are deliberately determined still to consider ourselves Wesleyan Methodists. We will still cleave to each other, as members of the same persecuted portion of the Christian church. We will, as formerly, meet together in all the social means of grace. And as the Trustees have power to bring to trial any Preacher, who is immoral—who breaks our rules—who is deficient in abilities—or whose doctrines are not Wesleyan; and as our attachment to those doctrines is unshaken and unabated, we will *not leave* the chapels which we and our fathers have reared. Nor will we be driven away from the sanctuaries under the droppings of which we, and our families, had so often and so greatly profited. Whilst, on the one hand, we relax not in our efforts to obtain Wesleyan reform—on the other, we will studiously avoid all unseemly excitement, all angry feeling, and all attempts at separation from the church. We will stand in our lot—confidently believing and praying that He, in whose hands are the hearts of all men, will speedily restore peace to our Zion and prosperity to our Jerusalem. Amen.

"7. That these resolutions be printed, and distributed to all the members in this Circuit."

These resolutions bear the signature of a Mr. Samuel Heape, who styles himself, a Circuit Steward, Leader, Local Preacher, and Trustee! Of upwards of *seventy* persons who attended the meeting, only *three* were "faithful found among the faithless," and opposed their adoption. There is much in the above proceedings of what is so unscriptural and anti-Methodistical, that it would have been our duty to expose the dangerous principles therein inculcated, had not these subjects been frequently, and most triumphantly refuted in the *Illuminator*; we therefore pass on by merely referring our readers to those papers.

A similar meeting was held at Heywood, on the 3rd of September, and again on the 7th, at the same place. Another was convened at Rochdale, on the 11th, composed of various official characters in the Circuit, at which meeting it was determined, that public Wesleyan reform meetings should be forthwith held, both at Rochdale and

* The religious public are well aware how much the Rochdale Trustees heeded rules, whether promulgated in 1797 or 1798, when they determined to bring into the chapel in that town the Grand Central Association, with the expelled Dr. Warren at their head, in the very teeth of the provisions of their own Deed, which they had actually signed, and in good faith promised to observe; and when nothing could check these mad and reckless measures but a legal process!

Heywood. We need scarcely observe that all the above meetings were called, not merely without the sanction, but without the knowledge of the Superintendent of the Circuit.

Affairs now assumed a decided form, so that Mr. Sumner determined that no longer delay should take place in reading the pastoral address of the Conference to the Societies. It was, consequently, read to the Rochdale members, by the Rev. John M'Owan, on the evening of the 13th of September. This circumstance gave considerable offence to the belligerent parties, who, sapiently enough, declared, that because the Preachers read this address, according to the express order of the Conference, *they* were the aggressors, and had cast the first stone. In consequence thereof, ulterior proceedings of agitation were resorted to; and on the following day, a circular, signed by one of the Trustees, and announcing that a public meeting would shortly be held, in order to give *Wesleyan reformers* an opportunity of explaining their views, was extensively circulated, and even distributed at the chapel doors after the usual week-night service. On Thursday, the 17th, a meeting of the Trustees was held, of which meeting Mr. Sumner had no notice, neither was he requested to attend; and here it was that the majority of six or seven to three of the Trustees resolved, that a public meeting to state the grievances of Methodists, and to advocate the principles of Wesleyan reform, should be held in the Rochdale Wesleyan chapel, on the 1st of the ensuing October, and that Dr. Warren, David Rowland, and James Livsey should be invited to attend; the last of whom should be requested to preside on the occasion. Of these proceedings Mr. Sumner received but casual information, on the following forenoon.

The despicable hypocrisy of these Trustees will be apparent to all who look into the affair, and recollect the tenor of the resolutions of the meetings of August 19, carried by such a sweeping majority on that occasion. Nevertheless, these men talk of honor, good faith, and Christian integrity, in all their proceedings! We say, let our readers judge; they declare, "we will not be driven away from our sanctuaries"—"we will studiously avoid all unseemly excitements"—"and all attempts at separation from the church." What dependance ought to be placed on their printed resolutions will appear, when we assert that those very men, of their own accord, have left the chapel, "which they and their fathers reared;" they have invited revilers from a distance, to rail against their own Ministers, in public assemblies convened by themselves, and then two of the Trustees—as a token of their acquiescence in all that these wholesale slanderers declared—formally, publicly, and most cordially shook hands with one of these strangers in the middle of his speech; we allude to the contemptible agitator from Liverpool, who has lately gained a deplorable notoriety by exhibiting his wife from platform to platform, as a victim to Methodistical tyranny and priestcraft; these Trustees attempted to hold this meeting for those iniquitous purposes, on their own Trust premises, in direct violation of the express provisions of their own Deed; they have endeavoured by means the most insidious and base, (and in a manner altogether becoming Absalom of old, who was also engaged in a similar bad work,) to alienate the hearts of the Societies and congregations from those who were appointed to labour among them and for them in the word and doctrine, and when they were enabled to ascertain that a majority were ready to act upon their request, they demanded to be freed from a yoke, of the existence of which they had never before dreamed; and commenced a system of the most aggressive measures, all of which were intended to force the Preachers into compliance with their views, under the intimidation of stopping supplies, and starving them and their families; during all this period, with daggers in their hands and words of poison in their mouths, these *worthy* Trustees of Rochdale, actually expected to be treated as dearly beloved brethren by their pastors!! This was indeed rather too much!

As soon as Mr. Sumner was fully acquainted with the nature of those proceedings which had taken place on the preceding evening, he, in company with his colleague, Mr. M'Owan, waited upon several of those who had been present, and enquired more particularly into the truth of the report; and finding the case to be as we have already stated, he urged them in the most conciliatory and courteous manner, immediately to rescind that resolution, and not desecrate the chapel premises by such a proceeding. The mild and peaceable demeanour of Mr. Sumner met with a perfect contrast in the conduct and spirit of many of those whom he visited, and he was most unhesitatingly assured, that, as a majority of the Trustees had agreed to hold a meeting for such purpose, the meeting would be held accordingly.

Still desirous, if possible, of preventing a rupture, which he foresaw these revolutionary measures would produce if carried forward, and deeply impressed with the evil which would certainly follow the holding of the meeting in the chapel, he very kindly convened, by notes, a meeting of several of the Trustees, whom he believed to

be principally concerned in the agitation, together with a few other friends, who had been accustomed to be consulted occasionally in the affairs of the Circuit. This meeting took place in the dwelling house of Mr. Sumner, on Saturday evening, September 19. It commenced with prayer, after which the Superintendent very freely and familiarly explained the nature and principles of the Wesleyan constitution and discipline, and particularly endeavoured to impress upon the minds of the Trustees who were then present, the illegality and inexpediency of holding the intended meeting in the said chapel, and the inevitable discord among the members of the Society which would be produced. Mr. Sumner and his excellent colleague continued for the space of four hours, reasoning with, and entreating these infatuated men, but without effect; they persisted in declaring their intention to hold the meeting. Anxious to ascertain what power the Trust Deed vested in his hands as the Superintendent, Mr. Sumner requested to have an opportunity of perusing that document, at the same time unequivocally stating to the persons then present, his positive intention of preventing to the utmost of his power, the assembling of that meeting in the Methodist chapel; at which, one of the Trustees, who the day previous had volunteered the loan of his copy of the Deed to Mr. Sumner, exclaimed, "I object to Mr. Sumner having the Deed without an order from the Trustee meeting;" the Trustees present promised to call a meeting of the Trustees for the purpose of considering the request of Mr. Sumner to inspect the Trust Deed. Prior also to the separation of the parties on that evening, the same individual who engaged to furnish Mr. Sumner with a copy of the Deed, and then retracted, openly stated as follows:—"I consider Mr. Sumner's announcement to oppose the meeting in the chapel sufficient reason for withdrawing my promise, and I object to his having the Deed; there being no cause why we should furnish him with weapons to contend against ourselves." This wisecrack does not appear to have possessed wit sufficient to know, that Mr. Sumner as the representative of the Conference, had as just right to be acquainted with the contents of the Deed as themselves.

On Monday, September 21, the Trustee meeting was held, at which two subjects of discussion were introduced: 1st, whether Mr. Sumner should be *allowed* to peruse the Deed, and 2nd, whether the Trustees would rescind the resolution of the former meeting. After a protracted conversation it was agreed, that a copy of the Deed which Mr. Howard had in his possession, and which he testified to be an examined copy of the Trust Deed, should be furnished to Mr. Sumner for his inspection; but on the subject of rescinding the resolution of the former meeting, Mr. Sumner prevailed nothing, inasmuch as the force of this question was evaded by the remark, that as all the Trustees were not present who had voted on that question, another meeting would be necessary for its discussion! No disposition, however, was manifested to call such a meeting. One of the disaffected Trustees feeling probably some qualms of conscience, on the gross indelicacy of the steps they were taking, thought, that out of respect for the feelings of Mr. Sumner, that part of the resolution which referred to the holding of the meeting in the chapel ought to be rescinded. The sincerity of this expression of regard for Mr. Sumner's feelings will appear, when we inform our readers, that this *amiable* Trustee was found on Tuesday evening with a *coterie* of Associationists, violating the engagement of the Monday evening, by concocting bills, announcing the reform meeting in the chapel! All that he obtained from them was a pledge, that they would not advertise the intended meeting, until he had perused the Deed. Mr. Sumner waited at home during the whole of the following day, the 22nd, for the receipt of the copy of the Deed, but it came not, until early on the forenoon of Wednesday, with the intimation, that it would be called for in the course of the evening of that day, to take to the Revising Barrister's court. As one among the many lamentable proofs of deficient integrity and base duplicity this party has displayed, we record the fact, that while Mr. Sumner was perusing this document, the bills advertising the objectionable meeting, were in the hands of the printer; and before seven o'clock, A. M., on Thursday, they were industriously circulated through the town, and upon the walls of Rochdale; and by nine, A. M., the same day, were placarded in Manchester.

At the meeting in which the question respecting a copy of the Deed to be furnished to the Superintendent was considered, Mr. Sumner was asked whether he had any intention to take legal proceedings; he replied—"At present I have no such intentions, but cannot pledge myself to any future course of proceeding." Nevertheless, the notorious Dr. Warren has had the unblushing effrontery to declare, in a meeting recently held in the metropolis, that "Mr. Sumner procured an inspection of the Rochdale chapel Deed, under a pledge that it should not be used for legal purposes." A more false statement than this could not have been uttered! Mr. Sumner expressly told the Trustees who met at his house on the 19th, that he wished to peruse a copy of the Deed, in order that he might learn the nature and extent of his prerogative; and

at a subsequent meeting, when questioned as to his intentions in reference to ulterior proceedings, he stated, that he did not then intend any legal process, but that he should avail himself of the advice of his friends, and judge accordingly. Notwithstanding, several of the Trustees, (whose names we spare,)—destitute of prudence, and anxious for the introduction of fell democracy ere they ingloriously, but most salutarily, left the Body—went so far as to require from him the pledge which the foolish Samuel Warren, ludicrously enough, imagined our excellent Superintendent of Rochdale was possessed of weakness enough to concede, but which Mr. Sumner, most properly, expressly, and peremptorily refused to give. In corroboration of the truth of this statement, we refer to the following testimonial, drawn up and signed by three of the Trustees resident in Rochdale, who are still faithful to the trust reposed in them, and who were present at the meeting referred to.

"As it appears that public statements have been made by certain persons, in various places, that our highly-esteemed Superintendent, the Rev. John Sumner, previous to his obtaining a perusal of the Rochdale chapel Deed, gave a promise or pledge, in a Trustee meeting, that he would take no legal proceedings against the Trustees—We, the undersigned, having been present on the occasion referred to, hereby declare that NO SUCH PROMISE OR PLEDGE WAS GIVEN BY MR. SUMNER. But that on the question being put to him, first by one Trustee and afterwards by another, whether he had any intentions of going to law, he replied—'Since I am pressed on this point, I will be candid with you. I have no present intentions of going to law. Not having seen the Deed, I cannot tell what my powers are, or whether I have any ; but I will give you no pledge as to my future course.'

(Signed)

"JAMES HARDMAN.

"BENJAMIN HARTLEY.

"HENRY CARTWRIGHT."

In a contemptible publication, notorious only for the malignant spirit which it breathes, and for the gross misrepresentations and falsehoods which it contains, entitled "Explanations explained," (!) bearing the signatures of John Howard and John Hoyle, it is asserted that Mr. Sumner had been guilty of intentional deception, in not communicating with the refractory Trustees after he had perused the Deed. Now, the only distinct understanding which existed between the parties, when they separated, was, that no further proceedings should be taken until a communication should take place between them, after Mr. Sumner's perusal of the Deed. The persons who were to make the communication were not named, Mr. Sumner distinctly stating, at parting—"I can see you, or you can see me." This understanding was, however, flagrantly violated by the disaffected Trustees, within a few hours after it was entered into, by their attending an Association committee, and issuing placards announcing the meeting. To have communicated with such characters, reckless of all honor and decency, would, in our opinion, have been the very madness of folly.

On Friday, the 25th—the *fourth* day after the Trustee meeting—the *second* day after the copy of the Deed was returned to the Trustee who had furnished it—and the day following that on which the towns of Rochdale and Manchester were inundated with the placards advertising the illegal meeting, Mr. Sumner went to Manchester, not to commence a legal process, which the precipitate proceedings of these lawless Trustees demanded there and then, but to consult with his brethren the Preachers of the Manchester Circuits, and to take the advice of Mr. T. P. Bunting about holding a watchnight in the chapel, instead of their public meeting, and to have a sufficient and legal notice drawn up, to be read from the pulpit the ensuing Sabbath day for that purpose. So reluctant was Mr. Sumner to contemplate a process in equity, that this was all the law he intended up to that period. From Mr. Bunting he was made acquainted with the utter insufficiency of this pacific scheme, and that the only method of preventing the meeting and preserving the chapel for its legitimate purposes was, to obtain a special injunction from his Honor the Vice-Chancellor. In this opinion the friends of Mr. Sumner fully concurred, and further suggested the propriety of Mr. Bunting accompanying Mr. Sumner that evening to Rochdale, as a legal friend, and to use his influence in persuading the refractory Trustees to alter their proceedings. This task Mr. Bunting kindly undertook, but failed in the attempt. He then made a formal demand of the Trust Deed ; first of George Ashworth, who denied having the custody thereof, but after a lengthened conversation acknowledged, that the required Deed was in the possession of a Mr. John Howard. Of him, therefore, did Mr. Bunting demand a sight of the Deed, but which Mr. Howard positively refused to grant. It ought be known that Mr. Samuel Heape, who figured away at the meeting of August 19, as chairman—Steward, Local Preacher, Leader, and Trustee, in the Rochdale Circuit—was present, and counselled Mr. Howard to tender such refusal. We also strongly suspect that it was this Samuel Heape who declared, at a subsequent Trustee meeting, that if Mr. Bunting had called upon him on such an errand, he should have been disposed to hand him into the canal, which is contiguous to his house ! Pretty language this, for a Local Preacher and Leader !

On Saturday evening, the 26th, the Trustees called a meeting of themselves, and

invited Mr. Sumner to attend; which he did. In answer to a question which the Trustees proposed, respecting the adoption of legal measures, Mr. Sumner said—"If you, as honorable men, will give me your promise that you will not hold the meeting in the chapel, I will pledge myself that no legal proceedings that I may have contemplated shall affect you." This proposition was most contemptuously spurned, and Mr. Sumner then, for the first time, avowed in what manner he intended to frustrate the holding of the reform meeting in the chapel; and then asked what they, (the Trustees) in such a case, would do? To which they replied—"Two magistrates and a sufficient police force will be in attendance to prevent disturbance and to keep the peace;" and desired to know from Mr. Sumner whether he had not already adopted legal proceedings; whose reply was—"It is stated that you have a right to hold the reform meeting in the chapel; I say, let it be tried, but I shall do every thing in my power, between this and next Thursday, to prevent it."

Thus was the excellent Superintendent of the Rochdale Circuit, driven by these Leaders and infatuated men, into the highest court in the land to crave protection for himself, his colleagues, and the Society committed to his care, in the exercise of their civil and religious liberties. That Divine Providence, however, which illumined the steps of our beloved Connexion in the affair of Warren, in the same court, shone upon the path of Mr. Sumner; and although the period of time in which this measure was to be achieved was short, and his Honor the Vice Chancellor at a distance from the Metropolis, nevertheless, a variety of circumstances transpired, all favourable to the grand result, and early in the morning of Thursday, October 1, Mr. Sumner, in company with his indefatigable and talented solicitor, Mr. T. P. Bunting, arrived in Rochdale with the injunction.

No time was lost in giving official intimation to the Trustees of the steps which had been taken; therefore, before Mr. Sumner saw his family, he hastened to the printer, that he might issue a formal notice of the injunction to the public; this was published soon after twelve o'clock at noon, and nineteen copies of the notice, specially for the Trustees, each nearly filling a folio page, were written out, and the greater part served before three, p. m. That Messrs. Howard and Hoyle should, in common with their co-refractory Trustees, feel great anxiety in knowing what the nature of the legal proceedings were, which they had recklessly compelled Mr. Sumner to adopt, we are not at all surprised, for we have noticed the anxiety depicted on the countenances of certain culprits at the bar, when waiting for the verdict of the jury, and the sentence of the judge; it appears also that Mr. Sumner has given these worthies huge offence, because he did not give the Trustees a *verbal* intimation of what was going on, in answer to certain cynical and obtrusive questions which some of them proposed. Here, in our opinion, Mr. Sumner acted with all due propriety. These obstinately-perverse Trustees had passed the rubicon, the day of verbal communication had gone by, they had drawn the sword and foolishly thrown away the scabbard, they had pertinaciously refused to relinquish the meeting in the chapel, and with most unblushing impudence, actually caused the platform for the reform meeting, that very morning, to be erected in the chapel. If these Trustees suspected that their Superintendent could have been guilty of such weakness, as to communicate verbally any more with them on this subject, we are heartily glad they have mistaken their man. No, no: Mr. Sumner's conduct has our hearty approval, in making these gentry *stop a bit*, until they should learn the object of their inquiry from the public advertisements, and from the official notices which were shortly served upon themselves.

On the forenoon of the last mentioned day, a document signed by several of the Trustees was presented to Mr. Sumner, stating, that if he would release them from their responsibilities as Trustees, they would peaceably retire from all association with the Wesleyan body. The ludicrous nature of such a proposition is obvious to every one; but the object which those had in view who proposed such a scheme, was so far answered, that it furnished subject of animadversion at the reform meeting, which subsequently took place. The common sense of the refractory Trustees, if any of this useful commodity was in keeping, would convince them of the utter impossibility of Mr. Sumner entertaining such a proposition for a single moment.

Immediately after the notice of the injunction was served on the several Trustees, a placard was published by themselves, announcing the adjournment of the reform meeting from the Wesleyan chapel to the Baptist chapel and to St. Stephen's church, a meeting house belonging to the late Lady Huntingdon's connexion. In allusion to that meeting, the following paragraph appeared in the *Manchester Times* of October 3, which is equally distinguished for falsehood and misrepresentation, together with numerous other articles which have been inserted, from time to time, on the unhappy disputes now existing among the Wesleyan Methodists.

"The Trustees of the Wesleyan chapel, Rochdale, conceiving themselves aggrieved by the conduct of their Preachers, and finding the responsibility of their engagements too heavy to be borne, were desirous a short time ago, of making a public statement of their grievances, with the view of procuring assistance in their trust; in short, a mere consultation with the people was all they sought, in order that the work of religion might proceed without hazard or danger. They applied to the constituted authorities in such cases, the Preachers, for permission to make use of the chapel for this purpose; but the Preachers unanimously refused to grant this moderate request. A public meeting was called, to be held in their own chapel: a step which they took upon an assurance from the Preachers that no legal proceedings would be adopted."

A more numerous assemblage of gross misrepresentation and black falsehoods were never crowded together in so small a compass. *It is not true* that they were aggrieved by the conduct of their Preachers; for they *professed* great respect and affection for them, and never complained of any thing they did, until—in consequence of the public and avowed determination of the Trustees to hold public Association meetings—the Conference pastoral address was read to the Societies. *It is not true* that their responsibilities were too heavy to be borne; for the Trust estate was in good condition, and had actually cleared nearly £200 during the year ending 1835. *It is not true* that they wished to get assistance in their trust, or to state their grievances, or to consult with the people for this end; neither did they consider these things necessary that religion might prosper. *It is not true* that any application was ever made to the Preachers for permission to hold a meeting in the chapel for such a purpose, or for Association or any special purposes whatever; consequently, *it is not true* that any such application was refused; the public meeting was called in accordance with their own placard, which, in their own words, declares that it was "*for stating the subjects which now unhappily agitate the Wesleyan Connexion, and of fully explaining the principles of Wesleyan reformers.*" In our humble opinion, the expelled gentry, Warren, Livsey, and Rowland, with the dram-merchant, Gordon, are not over and above qualified to explain the nature and extent of the pecuniary embarrassments of the Rochdale Trustees! *It is not true*, as we have already stated and confirmed, that any pledge had been given respecting the suspension of legal proceedings; and further, *it is not true* that the Preachers thought the meeting would be effectually prevented by these legal proceedings, for it was currently reported for several days previous to the time appointed for the public meeting, that other chapels had been *kindly* offered, provided they could not have the use of the Wesleyan chapel. We are aware that it has been said, the above untruths are but the twaddle of a newspaper; well, be it so: but that sewer of all iniquity, the *Christian Advocate*, declares they were uttered by the *quondam* Methodist Preacher, Samuel Warren, LL.D. in the public meetings which were held in the Baptist and St. Stephen's chapels.—Query—did the *consistent* Doctor invent, and then give publicity to these lies, or did these *veracious* Trustees teach that *puppet* of the Association so to speak, and then sit, complacently to enjoy the recital of those abominable falsehoods, the invention of their own depraved imaginations!

On Saturday evening, October 3, subsequent to the operation of the famous injunction, the Trustees had a notice printed, and posted in every avenue to the chapel, as well as on the doors and door-posts of the chapel and Sunday school, forbidding all meetings of whatever kind on the premises, except in the presence of one of the Travelling Preachers. This step was taken according to the advice of the solicitor employed by the dissentient Trustees, and, professedly out of respect to the injunction of the Vice-Chancellor. Even the chapel-keeper had orders from these disappointed and defeated Trustees not to open a door for the morning prayer-meeting, or to admit a child into the school until a Travelling Preacher made his appearance. The objects contemplated by this *ruse* were, in a great measure, frustrated by a counter-note which was issued by the Preachers. So utterly inconsistent and base were they in enforcing the prohibition, that while they seriously threatened to shut up the class-rooms altogether, if one of the faithful Trustees, who is also a Leader, should attempt to speak in the usual way to the members of his class, until the Preacher, after opening the meeting, went to an adjoining room to commence another class—they allowed those teachers who were of their own party to conduct the teaching of the children in seven or eight rooms of the same premises, at the same hour; nay, such were their professed *reverence* and *dread* of the injunction, that on one Sabbath, during the period of teaching, when the Preacher in attendance had retired for a few minutes into his own house—part of which is literally under the school-room, and consequently on the same premises—one of the litigious, but terrified Trustees penned, and another of the same kidney, brought to the Preacher the following hasty note:—

"Rev Sir—Under existing circumstances, I request your personal attendance in some one or other of the school-rooms, as I shall feel justified in desiring the teachers and scholars to return home, that I may not incur any risk or blame from my brother Trustees.—I am, Rev. Sir,

"Your injured Brother,

We need scarcely say, that the Preacher was speedily in attendance, to dissipate the fears of these inconsistent and hypocritical Trustees.

Mr. Sumner having been successful in securing the chapel for its legitimate uses, was naturally anxious to hold out the olive-branch of peace to all who might still be willing to unite with the Wesleyan Society, for purposes of religious edification and comfort. The terms which he proposed were as follow :—

"1. That in future you have no connexion with the Association; and refrain from promoting, in any wise, directly or indirectly, the interest of that or of any similar confederacy, whose object is to disturb and injure the Methodist Society.

"2. That should you entertain opinions on points of discipline differing from our written and published documents, you engage to hold those opinions privately, and at the same time statedly attend the means of grace instituted in our Body, peaceably submit to our discipline and conform to the usages of our Connexion.

"3. That should you at any future time see cause to change your mind with regard to this engagement, you will in that case send in your resignation to the Superintendent, and quietly retire from the Society."

These propositions were, however, rejected.

[We regret that our limits compel us to postpone the account of the subsequent proceedings of these Trustees, until our next number.]

THE NEW CONNEXION AND ITS LEGAL ABANDONMENT OF WESLEYAN THEOLOGY.

To prevent the Trustees of Methodist chapels from acting as though they were proprietors of them, by having these sacred edifices legally secured to the Connexion for whose benefit they were built, was once most fiercely denounced as a very arbitrary and tyrannical measure. We happen to live, however, in an age of reform. A procedure which our adversaries formerly censured as crafty, illiberal, and unjust, they have lived to learn, by many painful occurrences, that it is so really excellent as to deserve and require their imitation. The New Methodists are, at length, doing their utmost to secure their chapels to the Connexion; and to accomplish this object a Deed of Trust has been formed, an abridgement of which is contained in their *Magazine* for December, 1835.

We have carefully perused this document, on which, it is said, many chapels are founded; and though we might remark at considerable length upon some of its provisions, we shall merely select the one which defines what is to be taught in the pulpits to the congregations. As it is so brief as not quite to fill up *nine* lines in the *Magazine*, we shall transcribe it, for the information of our readers.

"And it is hereby agreed and declared that the doctrines and articles of faith to be from time to time preached in the said chapel shall be such as are contained in God's holy word (that is to say):—the self-existence, attributes, and perfections of God; the divinity of Christ; the personality and Godhead of the Holy Ghost; the inspiration of the Scriptures; the fall of man, through Adam's transgression—the depravity of his posterity; the general redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ; repentance towards God; justification by faith; sanctification through the Spirit; the necessity of abiding in faith and good works to the end; the resurrection of the dead; the general judgment at the last day; the eternal blessedness of the righteous; and the everlasting misery of the wicked."

As the adoption of the Deed from which we have made the above extract is strongly recommended, in some introductory observations, by an old supernumerary Preacher and two lay-gentlemen, one of whom has recently given, £20 to uphold the sinking *Advocate*, it is, probably—at least in substance—their own production. It is indeed worthy of such an origin. We respectfully and earnestly invite the attention of the more candid and sound part of the New Connexion to the exceedingly loose and imperfect doctrinal paragraph of this Trust Deed. It is true that Arminianism may be made to accord with this summary of doctrines; and may not *Calvinism*? Do not moderate Calvinists believe in "the general redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ, and in the necessity of abiding in faith and good works to the end" to prove the reality of grace, to honor religion, and to glorify God? It is evident, therefore, that there is not any thing in the Trust Deed which can prevent moderate Calvinism from being, some time or other, preached in chapels that belong to the New Connexion! But this is not the

worst of the case. Even *Arianism* may be introduced into these temples of God in conformity with the creed included in their form of settlement. Though it asserts "the divinity of Christ and the personality and Godhead of the Holy Ghost," yet as it is silent respecting the *co-eternity* and *co-equality* of the Son and Spirit with the Father, it is undeniably susceptible of an Arian interpretation! It likewise declares "the fall of man through Adam's transgression, and the depravity of his posterity;" but this general position easily gives way to a Socinian mode of explanation. What is there in these "articles of faith" to determine whether the fall of man be *moral* or *physical*; and whether the degeneracy of his descendants be *natural* or *acquired*—*total* or *partial*?—Nothing!

It also attests "justification by faith;" but as it stops short of saying, by faith *alone*, without the works of the law, it will bear, in the hands of an Arian, a *liberal* exposition!

Of this creed it may be correctly said, many are its sins of omission. Its authors seem as though they had studiously avoided giving it a Methodistical character. Concerning numerous scriptural and Wesleyan doctrines, it is still as death. It neither avows nor contradicts them. The particular providence of God—the Divine Sonship of Christ—the personality and evil agency of Satan—the authority and obligation of the Christian Sabbath—the necessity of a divine influence to produce repentance for sin, and trust in the Saviour—the direct witness of the Spirit to the adoption of believers into the family of God—the privilege of Christians now to be made perfect in love—the possibility of God's servants proving unfaithful, and falling finally from grace—&c., make *no part* whatever of "the doctrines and articles of faith" incorporated into this Deed of Trust! So much for *liberalism*, which, by refusing to *legalize* the publication of so many doctrines of Wesleyan Methodism, has virtually abandoned them!!

We are aware that some of our readers may inquire, whether some reference is not made in this document to Mr. Wesley's first four volumes of Sermons, and Notes on the New Testament, as illustrating its compendium of doctrines. Truth compels us to answer, *none whatever*. There is an allusion in one section of the general rules of the Body to these invaluable performances; but we have asserted in a former number of the *Illuminator*—and a New Connexion Minister in the *Lantern* has confirmed the declaration—that "this reference is a *dead letter*." It is not, therefore, to be found in the Deed of Trust; and its non-insertion is an abandonment of these standard works of Wesleyan theology!! And if the Preachers now consult these important writings at all, it is not with the impression that they are bound to believe and teach their great principles as doctrines according to godliness. The works of Mr. Wesley are thus placed on a level with those of Dr. Dwight; and the productions of the American Calvinistic divine are in as strict accordance with the *legalized* creed of the New Connexion as those that were penned by the celebrated founder of Methodism!!!

We have a right to exhibit and censure this state of things in the New community, because some of its principal advocates are guilty of making efforts to delude the public mind. The author of a *proselyting* tract, denominated, "An exposition of the principles of church government adopted by the New Connexion," is justly involved in this sentence of condemnation. This plausible, but unsound publication, which a burning zeal to make proselytes has extensively circulated, declares, that "the New Methodists *retain the doctrines* of Wesleyan Methodism; from which they differ *only* in church government and dissent from the Church of England." This statement is chargeable with delusion, for the New Connexion differs from the old one in *theology* as well as in polity. The doctrinal difference is both legal and practical. Is not the standard of orthodoxy under the guardianship of British law in the Deeds of chapels, widely different in the two communities?—Most certainly; for a considerable portion of the doctrines of Wesleyan Methodism has been denied a legal settlement in the newly-formed Deed of Trust belonging to the New Methodist Body. And it is owing to this legal rejection of Mr. Wesley's doctrines that Mr. Jones, Mr. Forsyth, and, of course, any other Preacher who pleases, are allowed in the New Connexion to denounce some of these theological principles as an outrage upon both Scripture and reason! Common honesty, therefore, as well as Christianity, requires that the disciples of Mr. Kilham should, under existing circumstances, give up their profession of having "retained the doctrines of Wesleyan Methodism."

We cannot conclude our remarks without stating, that the contents of this article have led us to thank God with all our heart, that Mr. Wesley legally established, in his Connexion, the preaching of all those truths which have been of immense benefit to mankind; and thereby prevented them from ever falling a prey to the rampant sovereignty of lay-delegation. Liberty to legislate on subjects of divinity we neither possess, nor desire, in the Wesleyan Body.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ILLUMINATOR.

SIR—The grievous errors, both theoretic and practical, into which the agitators of our Connexion have fallen, furnish matter of unfeigned grief to every true Wesleyan; and did not the cause of truth, and the welfare of immortal souls, require their exposure, you would doubtless throw a vail, thick as sackcloth, over their naked deformity. If it were only as a matter of history, that posterity might know the rocks on which others have split, and thus “made shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience,” it would be your duty to record the “sayings and doings” of the Association. But there is a hope, however faint, that the “deceived,” if not the “deceivers,” may, by your labours, be convinced of their errors, and induced to return to the fold from which they have strayed. From many of the unhappy men who have taken such prodigious pains to defame the characters of the Wesleyan Ministers, and misrepresent the nature of our excellent discipline, and thus injure the cause of Methodism, you have nothing to expect but bitter enmity and deadly hatred; but there need be no fear entertained of your allowing the sea of their gall and bitterness to drown in you the love of their immortal souls. Many of these persons are so destitute of education, of knowledge, and of sound principle, and their conduct is so revolting to a well-disciplined mind, that one is tempted to turn away from them in disgust, or utter words of indignant rebuke and reproach. But Hooker says—“There will come a time when three words, uttered in charity and meekness, shall receive a far more blessed reward than three thousand volumes written with disdainful sharpness of wit.” Would that this beautiful remark were more considered in the present day!

You have justly observed in one of your numbers that, “some centuries ago, the two spirits of lying and liberty, of falsehood and freedom, appeared in a state of alliance: What has happened once may happen again.” Alas! your prediction has been awfully fulfilled by some of the leading Associators of Bury. One would certainly have thought, that if these people had no regard for truth themselves—if they had no scruple in their own minds as to the promulgation of impudent and barefaced falsehood, they would have been deterred by a fear of the certain exposure awaiting the offence. But whether they think there is no disgrace in lying against the Wesleyan Ministers, or whether they conceive that the advantage to the cause of agitation will be sufficient to outweigh the discredit consequent upon detection, or whether, hurried away by their passions, their understanding is so darkened that they can no longer distinguish truth from falsehood; certain it is, they still continue their system of gross misrepresentation. Mr. Livsey, of Bury—a man who has been set forth by the Association as a rare example of truth, meekness, and generosity—has recently published a letter containing statements, which, while he penned them, he knew, or ought to have known, to be gross falsehoods. He begins this letter by asserting that the disturbances in the Wesleyan Society, Bury—which he, with fearful levity, denominates “bustle”—“commenced by one of the Preachers calling a Society meeting, and telling the members, if they did not pay as usual, their tickets would be withheld.” A statement more calculated to mislead, or even farther from the truth, can hardly be conceived. What will your readers, what will the Christian world think, when they are informed that what this gentleman calls “bustle,” commenced with *himself*? It originated in his taking the chair and sanctioning the proceedings of the meeting of agitators held in Rochdale, in October last, in furtherance of the objects of the Association. From the last Conference up to that time, the congregations in the Bury Wesleyan chapel were unusually large; the seats were all occupied, and more were in demand; many persons were under serious impressions; there were pleasing indications of an extensive revival; and those official persons who, before the Conference, had expressed dissatisfaction with some parts of the Wesleyan discipline, had agreed to abandon their opposition, and unite with their Preachers (of whom they spake in the highest terms) in seeking the prosperity of Zion. But Mr. Livsey could not withstand the temptation of presiding at a great public meeting; and, contrary to the advice and entreaty of the person whom he acknowledged as his pastor—in opposition to the opinion and counsel of the very men who are now united with him, who disapproved of the step he was about to take; yea, contrary to the misgivings of his own mind, he ventured into the fire of agitation at Rochdale, and thence, whether intentionally or not, threw into the Bury Circuit “firebrands, arrows, and death.” From that day, peace again took her departure from our Society; the tongue of slander was let loose, and there followed in her train, “confusion and every evil work.” Mr. Livsey, who had been borne with nearly a whole year—notwithstanding the leading part he had taken in the Association, by attending the meetings of delegates in Manchester and Sheffield, and by fostering op-

position to genuine Methodism in every possible way—was now called to account, at a meeting of Leaders and Trustees; and on the evidence of two living witnesses, found guilty of aiding and abetting the ringleaders of the Association in the work of agitation, and of countenancing the vilest calumnies against Methodism. And although his friends wished to make it appear that he was not previously aware of the nature of the meeting at which he had presided, he declared before them all that he went with his eyes open—he knew he was breaking the law of the Connexion, and did not intend to keep it; he expressed no regret, and would make no promise of future peaceable conduct; and because the Superintendent of the Circuit would not, *at once*, in violation of the law to prevent rash and hasty judgment, pronounce what was the penalty incurred, Mr. Livsey on the spot *resigned* his offices among us, and *retired* from the Society—Mark! he was not *expelled*, though his friends have said so; he voluntarily retired. Dr. Warren and his associates were forthwith invited to Bury, to hold a public meeting, at which the usual speeches were delivered in the most inflammatory style, and a resolution was passed expressing sympathy with Mr. Livsey, and a determination to support him; and the farce was concluded by the Association cry of “stop the supplies.” Mr. Livsey immediately formed a new Society, to which the discontented among us gradually united themselves, and every means was adopted to secure as large a secession from our Society as possible. Many of those whose names were still on our class-books ceased to contribute to the support of the Preachers in the Circuit, and were constantly urging those Leaders who were known to favour the Association principles to leave our Body and join the new party. A paper was clandestinely carried about for signature through the Circuit, of a similar import to the resolution passed at the public meeting; and although it was falsely represented as designed to induce the Superintendent to restore Mr. Livsey to his place among us, its authors knew it would operate as a bond to hold all who signed it to support his proceedings.

It is true that one of the Preachers called a Society meeting, not, as Mr. Livsey has stated, at the *commencement* of the “*bustle*,” but in the *midst* of it, with a view to undeceive the unwary; and many persons who heard him, have repeatedly declared that he did, in a very lucid and affectionate manner, point out the evils of agitation, and especially the great sin against Christ and Methodism, of which certain persons in the Society had for some time been guilty, in withholding support from the men whom they acknowledged as their Ministers; and, by “stopping the supplies,” endeavouring to starve them into a compliance with their demands. Such persons were indeed informed that if they persisted in disobeying the ordinance of Christ, and the rule of Methodism, they could not be recognised as members of our Society; but they were distinctly reminded, that if they felt themselves aggrieved by the Preachers withholding their tickets—the only course that was left open—Methodism had given them the right of appeal. How Mr. Livsey, with these facts before him, could assert that the “*bustle*” in the Society here “*commenced* by one of the Preachers holding a Society meeting,” which did not take place until the *bustle* had been continued for several weeks, and which was designed to bring it to a termination, can only be accounted for by a reference to the demoralizing influence of the cause in which he is engaged.

The next misrepresentation in Mr. Livsey’s letter relates to the effects which he attributes to the Preachers address, referred to above. “This,” he writes, “instead of *frightening* the people, produced an opposite effect; many determined to make the experiment, and see whether the Preachers were indeed more willing to give than to receive.” Many, however, can testify that the language of the address in question was not calculated to *frighten*, but to instruct and persuade—the Preacher who delivered it treating his hearers as “rational creatures, freemen, and Christians.” And if Mr. L. will maintain that there are *many* who determined, in consequence of hearing that address, to do what they had not previously determined to do, “stop the supplies,” he may be safely challenged to prove the assertion. On the contrary, *many* might be mentioned, who, as the class-books show, did, shortly after hearing that address, pay up their usual contributions, being doubtless convinced of their previous error. But let impartial men say, whether it be consistent with either Christian charity or common honesty to insinuate, that if a Preacher considered himself bound to withhold the usual Society ticket from persons who, as he conscientiously believed, were acting contrary to the laws of Christ and the rules of the Society—offering them, at the same time, the fullest right of appeal—such refusal would prove that he was not more willing to give than to receive; or indeed would prove any thing, except that he was determined to do his duty, though he knew that for doing it he should receive nothing but abuse. No unprejudiced person needs to be told, that it is not a love of filthy lucre, but of souls, which has actuated the Preachers against whom Mr. Livsey writes. Had they been influenced by a motive less pure than the love of truth, and of the cause of God, they would have yielded, for the sake of personal ease and quiet, to the torrent of opposi-

tion they have met with in the discharge of their duty. Both Mr. Livsey and many other members of the Association in Bury know that these same calumniated Preachers have repeatedly declared that it afforded them the greatest pleasure to give the right hand of fellowship to the pious poor of the Society who did not and could not contribute to their support; and he knows that he cannot produce a single instance in which a ticket has been refused to any member on the ground of *inability* to "give."

"After this," says Mr. Livsey, "the prayer leaders were called together, and 31 out of 40 were dismissed from duty, for being without the Society tickets, which the Preachers had refused to give without pay; thus saying, in language well understood, 'We want not you but yours.'" In all probability, this statement has been made on the authority of two or three bold and impertinent youths, who had either joined the Association or intended to do so, and who came to the meeting in question expecting to be told they could not remain on the Wesleyan prayer-leaders' plan, as they were not members of the Society. But Mr. Livsey has made himself responsible for its accuracy, and therefore the whole weight of the falsehood must rest upon his head. Thirty-one out of forty prayer leaders dismissed from duty for not having Society tickets, which the Preacher had refused to give without pay! O truth! whither art thou fled? What are the facts of the case? Meeting after meeting of the prayer leaders was called in the usual way, by announcement from the pulpit; but few, if any, of the thirty-one, who, Mr. Livsey says, were *dismissed* from duty, for some time made their appearance. At length, however, two or three of them came, and were informed that as they were not members of the Society, they could not be continued on the plan, according to a rule on which the prayer leaders had always acted. And these persons had not been *refused* tickets; but, after receiving, had voluntarily returned them. There were indeed many others on the printed plan whose names, when called over, were struck off, not "because they had not tickets, which the Preachers had refused to give," but because some had signified their desire to withdraw; others had ceased for some time to attend to their duty; some had joined other religious bodies, and many of the famous 31 were then actually forming a prayer leaders' plan in connexion with the Association!!

On passing to the business of the Sunday School, Mr. Livsey aims a blow at the gentlemen, who, to release him from his responsibilities, took upon themselves a debt of more than £3000. He calls them, ironically, "trustworthy Trustees." This is truly harmless when applied to such men as P. Rothwell, Esq., of Bolton, and R. Bealey, Esq., of Radcliffe; but it manifests the spleen which rankles in the breast of the writer. The case of the Sunday Schools shall be stated in as few words as possible. The rules of the school, though drawn up many years ago by the Preachers then stationed in the Circuit, have since been frequently revised and altered, until at last, the Preachers were excluded from any share in the government of the school, were deprived of their right to attend Committee and other meetings, and were not so much as recognized in any way, in the last edition of the rules. The school had been conducted in such a manner, that nearly all the genuine friends of Wesleyan Methodism had retired from it in disgust. Writing was indiscriminately taught on the Sabbath day, and in a word, the only choice left to the Trustees was, either to reform the old, or commence a new school upon the premises, or else suffer them to be used clandestinely for the benefit of the Association. Under these circumstances, certain propositions were by them submitted to a deputation from the School Committee, and after hearing their objections, were modified so far as the Trustees deemed to be at all consistent with Christian principle. To the whole of the modified propositions, with one exception, and that not affecting any fundamental principle, a majority of the deputation agreed, and left the meeting of Trustees, apparently in a most conciliatory temper, some of them expressing their surprise and pleasure on finding the Trustees so willing to meet their wishes. The same evening a copy of the modified propositions was handed to one of the deputation, who forthwith repaired to the school-room to meet the Committee convened for the purpose of considering them. The result was, that the Committee resolved on calling a meeting of the teachers on the following Sabbath. That meeting was accordingly held, when the whole of the propositions were unceremoniously rejected—voted against by some of the very persons, who, at the meeting of the Trustees had declared their approbation of the greater part of them; and so destitute of courtesy were the persons who conducted this opposition, that no official answer has been sent to the Trustees or Preachers, nor was any hint given at the meeting that any such answer was necessary. Nay, some of these persons have actually attempted to defend in person their own inconsistency and dissimulation. It is only due, however, to the characters of some of the members of the Committee and teachers' meeting; that they proposed the adoption of the propositions, and have now united to carry them into effect. The Trustees had only one course left, to take possession of

the premises, and not allow the occupation of them by persons who are known to be hostile to Methodism, and ceaseless in their efforts to promote the objects of the Association. Notice was accordingly given to the parties who had rejected the propositions, and on the Sunday but one following, a school was established on the principles of the Connexion—which will doubtless prove a blessing to thousands yet unborn. There are already in the school nearly 200 children, 60 of whom are taught to write on week day evenings; and there are 60 efficient teachers. The change which has taken place in this school is one of the most pleasing features in the present aspect of Methodism in Bury. Formerly the bulk of the teachers were the avowed opponents of the Conference, and because the Preachers as a body, had declared that it would be for the interest of the children, as well as more consistent with the sanctity of the Sabbath, not to teach the art of writing on that day, but to employ one or more evenings in the week for that purpose, they were held up to the children, their parents, and the public at large, as enemies to the education of the poor, lest they should approach to the attainments of their own children. To this calumny is mainly attributable the bad feeling manifested in Bury against the Preachers. But truth is great, and will prevail; and the public will soon see by *facts*, not reasoning or assertion, that the Preachers are the friends of the poor, and the promoters of education on the largest scale. The week night schools are working well; and it is hoped, at no distant period a day school will be established in connexion with our Society in Bury. Were the character of many of the “noble spirits” who voted against the propositions of the Trustees, exhibited, the Wesleyan Methodists throughout the kingdom would rejoice that they had fled to the Association *warehouse*—yclept a *tabernacle*—where they will doubtless find other spirits like their own, and there blend their friendly souls together, in opposition to every thing which bears the stamp of the Conference. But Methodism needs not such help to support her claims; and if offered, it would be disdainfully rejected. A certain individual belonging to the Association in Bury, may, however, be assured, that a portion of light will be thrown upon his conduct in purloining about £9 from another Sunday School in the Circuit, unless that sum be speedily restored to the school for which it was collected.

Mr. Livsey boasts that eleven Leaders and Local Preachers, with more than one-half of a Society, consisting of little more than 300, have declared in favor of the Association. This is almost the only statement in his letter which bears the stamp of truth. But what wonder that 150 members should have joined the Association! Hooker has justly remarked—“He that goeth about to persuade a multitude that they are not so well governed as they ought to be, shall never want attentive and favorable hearers.” The men who rail at established authority, and profess singular freedom of mind and liberality of sentiment, in this age of liberalism, are sure to have admirers. “That which is wanted in the weight of their speech is supplied by the aptness of men’s minds to accept and believe it.” Besides this, parental authority, business connexions, interest, matrimonial ties, threats, persecution—every means, have been used to induce persons to join the Association. Some of these Associators, like the Pharisees of old, compass sea and land to make one proselyte. Having fixed upon some member of our Society as likely to be led aside, they supply him with books—retail in his hearing the slanderous reports contained in certain publications—follow him with teasing importunity—tell him he can never have any peace of mind while he is in the old Connexion—represent the Preachers as tyrants, despots, supporters of Conference-misrule, enemies to the poor, &c. All these, and a thousand other things, equally well founded, are daily buzzed in his ear; and to conclude, he is assured that if he join the Association, he will be treated “as a rational creature, freeman, and Christian;” and there find the life and power of religion which the old Body has lost. “Nothing,” says Mr. James, “can be more despicable than the conduct of these spiritual kidnappers, who are ever decoying unwary children from their homes.” And yet many are so much children in understanding that they allow themselves to be deceived by such persons, upon the most easy terms. If there are persons who cannot conscientiously continue with us, they have no right to endeavour to make others dissatisfied. “This is a step,” says the writer just quoted, (to whom we would refer these parties,) “which is not unfrequently taken by some to justify their own conduct, but which is attended with more guilt than words can describe.”

You are aware, Mr. Editor, that it requires more words to state the truth than to tell a lie; and therefore, it will be necessary to trespass a little longer on your time and patience. The next statement in Mr. Livsey’s letter which shall be noticed, is more flagrant than any that has preceded it. It is as follows: “Within the last few days, one of the leading singers, although placed in office by the Leaders, under a former Superintendent, has been expelled by the mandate of the present Conference despot.” By the “Conference despot,” we suppose, Mr. Livsey means the present Superintendent

of the Bury Circuit. How rapid is error in its downward course! The present Superintendent expelled by his mandate one of the leading singers from the orchestra!—No, Mr. Editor; this is a barefaced, shameless, impudent falsehood. He never so much as *desired*, either by word, or letter, or messenger, the individual referred to, to vacate his place as one of the leaders of the singing, and he challenges Mr. Livsey or any other person, to prove the contrary. Mr. Livsey concludes his singular letter, by saying of the Methodist Preachers, “their race is almost run; their power is fast declining, and they must see, ere long, unless given up to strong delusion to believe a lie, that the interests of the Preachers and the people are identically one.” Poor man! how pitiable to see a person on the borders of the grave, fighting with a shadow! That the interests of the Preachers and the people are identically one is the very position which was exhibited to him, by the present Superintendent, as a safeguard to the pastoral authority placed in the hands of the Preachers. He was assured that the interest of the Preachers was so blended with that of the members that the former could do nothing against the latter, without committing an act of moral suicide. Whether the Preachers at present in the scene of action have nearly run their race is in the hands, not of Mr. Livsey or any of his friends, but of Him whose they are and whom they serve; and when their course is finished, they hope to obtain the prize. But in despite of infidelity, and radicalism—of opposition from the world, and of the treachery of “false brethren,” others will be raised up to fill their places; and in answer to the prayers of the faithful,

“As giants they will run their race, Exulting in their might,
As burning luminaries chase The gloom of hellish night.”

Mr. Livsey has for some time past been in the habit of predicting the downfall of Methodism; but time has proved, and will prove, that he is neither a prophet nor a prophet's son. He appears to fancy that he centres in himself the whole Methodistical world, and at his bidding can make the sun of Methodistical prosperity stand still. Such a man excites our pity rather than our ire. Since he left the Body, the work of God has proceeded with the same steady course as before. The amount of collections and subscriptions in behalf of the General Chapel Fund is upwards of one-fourth more than was sent from this Circuit last year. Souls have been converted—the little flock of the faithful has been led into green pastures and besides still waters, under the pastoral superintendence of the Shepherd and Bishop of souls; and Mr. Livsey may assure himself that the division which has taken place in the Bury Society, so far from being a symptom of decline—though an evil in itself—will prove to be an evidence of vitality in the Body, and the forerunner of improving health. He will, perhaps, admit that “the occasional storm is less mischievous in its effects than the stagnant and quiescent atmosphere, which is purified by no breeze, and settles in the form of fever and pestilence on the face of the earth.”—Yours truly,

Bury, March 7, 1836.

H. D.

WESLEYAN REFORM TACTICS.

Among the dishonorable stratagems to which the Wesleyan reformers have had recourse, and by which they have sought to bring odium on the Conference, that of *falsely quoting* its Minutes, in some instances, and of *perverting* and *distorting* their sense, in others, is worthy of remark. One instance of each, from the *Christian Advocate*, shall suffice on this occasion. Any notice of its statements would, indeed, be unnecessary, but for the purpose of showing the *animus* of the “Grand Central Association,” *whose organ it is*.^{*} In one of its leading articles, (Dec. 7,) an attempt is made to prove an inconsistency between the Minutes of 1825, and those of 1834; and this is done by falsely quoting the Minutes of the first-mentioned year. We shall exhibit in opposite columns, the passage as it stands in the Minutes, and as quoted by the *Advocate*.

^{*} In proof of this, (mangle its own *denial of the fact*,) I refer to the report of the Sheffield meeting of delegates. Twice were the thanks of that meeting presented to the conductors of that paper.—“Dr. Warren admired the able and uncompromising manner in which the *Christian Advocate* had supported its principles. He admired also its *disinterestedness*. . . . At the same time, its *correspondence* was invaluable. *Regarding it as one of the greatest bulwarks of the Association*. . . . He cordially supported the resolution.”—The subscriptions of Dr. Warren, and the principal members of the Association, and the subscriptions of the different reform Associations, in their collective capacities, to the *Christian Advocate* begging fund, speak the same language. Dr. Warren said, he “had to thank God. . . . that *THEY had the Christian Advocate*.” “Mr. Wood then proceeded to lay before the delegates a *plan for the future operations of the Association*; . . . he recommended that branch Associations should be formed, &c. . . . that certain agents and lecturers should be appointed, who should hold public meetings, distribute tracts, *recommend the Christian Advocate*,” &c.

Extract from the Minutes of 1825.

"The Conference do unanimously protest against an opinion which has on this occasion been insinuated in certain quarters, viz. that the system of discipline peculiar to Wesleyan Methodism directs or requires an official interference on the part of its Ministers and Pastors, in such cases as that which led to the recent proceedings at York. The Conference, on the contrary, solemnly declares that Mr. Thomas Hill, through the whole of this business, has acted on his own individual responsibility, and had no sanction whatever from the religious Society to which he belongs, or from the rules and usages by which that Society is governed."

Extract from the Christian Advocate.

"The Conference of 1825 had, by special minute, 'unanimously protested against the opinion that the system of discipline peculiar to Wesleyan Methodism directs or requires an official interference on the part of its Ministers and Pastors, IN REFERENCE TO THE CONDUCT OF INDIVIDUAL MINISTERS IN THEIR CIVIL CAPACITY. The Conference, on the contrary, solemnly declares that Mr. * * *, through the whole of this business, has acted on his own individual responsibility, and had no sanction or authority whatever from the religious Society to which he belongs, or from the laws and usages by which that Society is governed.' This is common sense, and this was Wesleyan law and usage until the year 1834, when it was argued that a Wesleyan Minister could do nothing as a man, and on his own individual responsibility as a citizen, but that," &c.

It will be observed that the words italicized in the preceding extract from the Minutes are omitted in the professed quotation of the passage by the *Advocate*; and the words which we have given in capitals in the second column, are not in the Minutes, but are foisted in by the *Advocate*, to give the passage a different sense, and to make it appear that the Conference of 1825 had renounced all control over its Preachers, in reference to their conduct as individuals in their civil capacity. With equal hardihood, it asserts that the Conference of 1834 assumed the entire control over individual Preachers in their civil capacity, as the following comparative view will show.

Extract from the Minutes of 1834, p. 104, 105.

"That the first decision of the District meeting (Article 7)—which, without requiring from Mr. Stephens any unreasonable sacrifice of the right of private judgment, or any public renunciation of his peculiar opinions, ONLY demanded his resignation of the office of Secretary to the Church separation Society, and his entire abstinence, until the direction of the Conference could be obtained, from all overt acts of hostility against the Religious Establishment of our country—has the approbation of the Conference.

"The Conference now requires from Mr. Stephens a distinct pledge, NOT IN REFERENCE TO ANY PECULIARITIES OF PRIVATE OPINION, but of his readiness to meet, as a Wesleyan Methodist Minister, the wishes of his brethren, and to consult the peace and good order of the Connexion by strictly refraining from all future proceedings, similar in character and spirit to those which have been so justly offensive in the past year, and to devote himself wholly to his proper work and calling; and on giving this pledge, Mr. Stephens shall be restored to his place in our Body."

Extracts from the Christian Advocate.

* * "Until the year 1834, when it was argued that a Wesleyan Minister could do nothing as a man, and on his own individual responsibility as a citizen, but that all his opinions, persuasions, and conscientious convictions, belonged to the Conference; which had power to exercise supreme dominion over the understanding, and social influence of its members. It was DECREED that the political question of the union between Church and State was a doctrine of the Body; as much so as JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH, and the WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT."

"All freedom of thought and action, in political matters, was notoriously annihilated by the Conference of 1834!"

And thus it is that the Association and its agents endeavour to persuade the ignorant, that Methodism as it is, is not Methodism as it was.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are obliged to our valuable London friend for his communication; but the whole of our present number being in type when it arrived, we are compelled to defer it for the present month.

To our Edinburgh correspondent, "OBSERVER," we are obliged to make the same apology for the non-appearance of his paper.

We have other communications from Scotland, which we are under the necessity of omitting, at present, for the want of room.—"Timothy Sykes" has come to hand. We would gladly publish his letter, but have no space.—To many other valuable contributors we say, in general terms, that if their contributions have not appeared, it is not from inattention on our part, but solely on account of the limited nature of our little periodical.

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